

General Kirby-Smith



General Kirby-Smith

By

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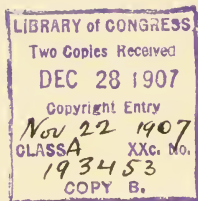
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To the
Citizens of Florida,
and especially to the
Confederate Veterans and Daughters
of the Confederacy
of that State,

This Life of a Distinguished Floridian and
Confederate Leader, and withal,
Patriotic American,
is dedicated

Preface

THE purpose of this book is to set forth the life of its subject more as a man than as a military leader; and with that object in view, letters written by him at West Point, on the battlefields of the War with Mexico, on the Southwestern Frontier, in Virginia while recruiting the Armies of the Confederacy and while recovering from the wound received at Manassas, and from Mexico and Cuba after the fall of the Confederacy, have been freely drawn upon. In editing these letters for this purpose, the present writer has omitted only such portions as were of local, temporary or personal interest, denoting such omissions where they occur in the midst of paragraphs. The military operations of the Kentucky Campaign and of the Trans-Mississippi Department are related in the words of papers carefully prepared by General Kirby-Smith for publication shortly after the close of the Civil War. The work is therefore chiefly autobiographical, though neither the letters nor the papers were written with any thought that they would be used for such a purpose. In his extended use of these materials the present writer frankly acknowledges that his true relation to the volume is that of editor rather than author, and as such he here expresses

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his obligations to Mr. Sanderson Smith, of New York; to Major E. K. Webster, U. S. A., and other members of the family; and to the Hon. John T. Beard, of Florida, for valuable assistance rendered in the preparation of the book and in seeing it through the press.

One who took the deepest interest in every detail of the preparation of this volume, was in the Providence of God, not permitted to see its publication. Very early on Sunday morning, November 3rd, 1907, at Sewanee, Tennessee, Mrs. Cassie Selden Kirby-Smith passed from the Church Militant to the rest of Paradise. The following day she was laid to rest by the side of her distinguished husband in the Sewanee cemetery.

A. H. N.

The University of the South,
Sewanee, Tennessee,
November, 1907.

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INTRODUCTION

IN APRIL, 1865, when the news of the surrender of General Lee reached a small town in New Jersey, a boy of ten years, who participated in the rejoicing with which the news was received, was prompted to ask if all the Confederate Generals had surrendered, and if the war were actually ended. He was informed that there were several general officers who had not surrendered, and among them was mentioned General Kirby-Smith. This name fixed itself upon the mind of the boy. Listening attentively to the discussions he heard among his elders at the time, he learned something more about the Confederate General, the oddity of whose name had the effect of making him a hero in the boy's mind. He learned that this Confederate General had been, since early in 1863, in supreme command of what was known as the Trans-Mississippi Department of the Confederate Army; that the Department included Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and the Indian Territory; that he had organized a government there and had made that government

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self-supporting, so that after the collapse of the Confederate Government at Richmond and the surrender of General Lee, fears were entertained among the Federal leaders, that if the person of Jefferson Davis were not secured, he might escape to this Trans-Mississippi region and there cöoperate with the military commander in maintaining a Confederacy, rather more contracted than the other, yet likely to hold out for some time longer. And secretly the boy hoped that this might be; — not from any feeling of disloyalty to the Union, but probably because he thought it would add interest to the history that was then making itself. This hope was indulged in secret, although in all the discussions of public affairs to which the boy listened at the time, he was much impressed by the moderation with which the leaders of the then crumbling Confederacy were always referred to, and the absence of all personal bitterness, even in the midst of the rejoicing over the surrender which brought the war to a close.

Twenty years later, the New Jersey boy came to the University of the South, at Sewanee, Tennessee, and among the first persons he met there, was General Kirby-Smith, looking very much like the war-time engraved portraits of him, save that his long beard was snowy white instead of jet black; his head more bald; and instead of the gray uniform of a Confederate General, he was most frequently seen in

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scholastic cap and gown. In the personal acquaintance which followed the first meeting, the New Jersey boy learned to know General Kirby-Smith, not only as the Confederate General who was the last to surrender, but also as one who had borne a distinguished part in the war with Mexico and had subsequently had a long and interesting career on the Southwestern frontier in a region with which the New Jersey boy had become familiar. But most of all he came to know him as a scholar and a Christian gentleman — a representative of a class of which the Confederate Army was largely composed; and the acquaintance became sufficiently close to justify the Yankee boy's undertaking, at the close of another twenty years, to write a life of this hero of his boyhood and to show the world who he really was.

To this task he has been drawn by coming into close touch with the General's life and by having his character more deeply impressed upon him in two previous literary ventures, notably in editing the *Memoirs of the Right Reverend Dr. Quintard, Second Bishop of Tennessee*. In those *Memoirs*, General Kirby-Smith appears in a light which confirms the opinion already formed that his life is of interest not only to the survivors of the late Confederacy and to Southern people generally, but to all Americans, as of the highest type of American citizen.

CHAPTER I

THE KIRBYS, THE SMITHS AND THE KIRBY-SMITHS

IT WAS by one of the accidents of history that Edmund Kirby Smith was by birth a Southerner and not a native of the State of Connecticut. All his forbears for several generations were from that New England State or from Massachusetts, and most of them were prominent in the history of New England. Notable among them was Ephraim Kirby, a native of Litchfield, Connecticut, who joined the Revolutionary Army at the age of eighteen, before the battle of Bunker Hill, and served throughout the war of the Revolution, participating in nineteen engagements, receiving eighteen wounds and surviving after being left for dead on the field at Germantown. He rose to the rank of Colonel before the close of the war, in 1783.

It was to the town of Litchfield that the fragments of the leaden statue of George III, previously standing in Bowling Green, New York City, were sent, when that statue was torn down and broken up by the Sons of Liberty, upon receiving the news of the Declaration of Independence, in 1776. They were there

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given to the patriotic ladies of the town to be converted into bullets for the use of the soldiers who were fighting for the independence of the colonies. The number of bullets thus made is given as 37,775; and of these, 17,592 were made by Mrs. Reynold Marvin, the wife of "Deacon" Reynold Marvin, and her daughter Ruth.

After the war, Colonel Ephraim Kirby returned to Litchfield, applied himself to securing an education, was for a short time a student at Yale College, and received from that college, in 1787, the honorary degree of Master of Arts. He studied law with Captain ("Deacon") Reynold Marvin and was admitted to the bar. In 1789, he published "Reports of the Decisions of the Superior Court and Court of Errors," the first volume of law reports issued in the State of Connecticut, and probably the first in the United States. He was a member of the Society of the Cincinnati; was for thirteen years a member of the State Legislature, and was several times an unsuccessful candidate for the Governorship of Connecticut. In 1801, he was appointed by President Jefferson Supervisor of United States Revenue for the State of Connecticut. On the acquisition of Louisiana by the United States, he was made a judge of the newly acquired territory and died at Fort Stoddard, Mississippi, on the 2nd of October, 1804, while on his way to enter upon the duties of his office.

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This, however, is not so interesting to us at present as the fact, that some time prior to 1790, Colonel Ephraim Kirby married Ruth Marvin, daughter of his law preceptor, and had by her two sons, who became soldiers in the War of 1812: Reynold Marvin Kirby and Edmund Kirby (the latter serving his country also in the war with Mexico); and a daughter, Frances Marvin Kirby. Some time prior to 1807, Frances Marvin Kirby married Joseph Lee Smith, a native of New Britain, Connecticut, whose father, Elnathan Smith, had been an officer in the French and Indian War and a Major in the Commissary Department in the Revolution, and whose mother was the daughter of Colonel Isaac Lee, grandson of the first settler in the town of Farmington, Connecticut. Joseph Lee Smith was educated at Yale College, studied law and was practicing his profession when the War of 1812 began. He was appointed Major in the Twenty-fifth Infantry, participated in the invasion of Canada, was promoted Lieutenant Colonel and brevetted Colonel for bravery at the battle of Stony Creek in June, 1813, and became Colonel in 1818, but resigned from the army that year. In 1821, being appointed Judge of the Superior Court of Florida by President Monroe, he removed to that Territory. He fixed his residence at St. Augustine, and there a son was born to him on the 16th of May, 1824, who, though descended on both sides from Connecticut people,

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was a native Southerner. To this son the baptismal name of Edmund Kirby was given.¹

Florida at the time of Judge Smith's residence there presented all the conditions of frontier life. Twenty years after removing there, the Judge wrote of St. Augustine as being "out of the world." It

¹ The Judge had given to each of his older children the name of his wife's family and so prepared the way for the change of the surname Smith to Kirby-Smith in his branch of the family. Throughout his boyhood and until after the war with Mexico, the subject of this biography signed his name either E. K. Smith, or Edmund K. Smith, while his elder brother, Ephraim Kirby Smith, was known as Kirby Smith. After the Mexican War, in which the elder brother lost his life, Edmund began to use his middle name, possibly out of a tender regard for his brother's memory, though more probably to distinguish himself from the several Smiths who won distinction in that war. The widow of Ephraim Kirby Smith objected to this appropriation of the name and thought that the name Kirby-Smith should be the exclusive possession of her late husband and of her son, Joseph Lee Kirby Smith, of whom we shall see more later. Edmund was not generally known as Kirby-Smith until near the beginning of the Civil War. Throughout that war he was known as General E. Kirby Smith, the Kirby being regarded as a given name and as no part of his surname. He was mentioned in all official reports as one of the innumerable Smiths. In the midst of the struggle the question of the use of the name arose, and some one wrote to the Northern papers somewhat resentfully of the "assumption" by the General of the name of "Kirby Smith," which it was claimed belonged properly to the family of Ephraim Kirby Smith. In the naming of his own eleven children, General Kirby-Smith effectually carried out his father's evident intention and the family name is now Kirby-Smith.

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was a town having a population of from 1,600 to 1,700 and was frequently visited by epidemics of sickness. In one of them there were 1,200 sick and nearly all of the officers of the garrison were carried off. On another occasion (1839), nearly half the population was "afflicted with a severe malignant bilious fever, almost yellow fever, and there were many deaths." The Judge mentions in a later letter the prevalence of "grippe." From 1835 to 1843, the Seminole War was in progress, and the lives of the residents of the territory were in constant peril. The Judge wrote in 1841:

"I have at this time a slight fever occasioned by my recent exposures to the hot sun and miasmas of this country. Our war is not yet entirely ended. We have been faithless and treacherous to the Indians. Recently, Wild-Cat Coacoochee was, while on a visit and with a pass from the Commanding General, taken prisoner and sent west of the Mississippi River. The Indians understand these violations of moral obligations and of national faith, as well as we understand them, and will never trust us. We have now to hunt them down to the last man before we can be safe."

A few weeks later, the Judge related an incident illustrative of the conditions of life in Florida at that time:

"In this Indian country such things as I am about

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to relate are daily happening to others, exciting no comment. On my return from court held some time ago in Alachua, at the village of Newmansville, about a hundred miles in the interior and near to that portion of the Territory from which the savage enemy has never been driven; proceeding by myself (having been detained by business so that I could not accompany the military escort provided for the court), and having progressed on my way from Newmansville about ten miles, I perceived at the moment of crossing the brow of a hill, three Indians on my right at about half rifle distance. My first impulse was to wheel about and return to Newmansville; but to return, having begun a homeward journey, is always irksome to me, and I determined to keep on toward home if possible. With this in view, I wheeled about toward the brow of the hill which I had just passed, but with great noise and flourish, beckoning with my hat in hand, and making signals as if to persons behind me to hasten on. Then suddenly wheeling again toward the Indians, I dashed at them as if intending with my pretended party to overwhelm them. When lo, as I hoped, they took rapid flight to a near swamp, leaving me to gallop unmolested to the next settlement, twenty miles from Newmansville, which is garrisoned and stockaded, and where I remained until the next day, when I resumed my lonely but safe ride to St. Augustine.

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“On the very day I left Newmansville at twelve o'clock, just at evening, these three Indians appeared there, attacked and burned a house upon the outskirts of the village, killed one of its occupants and then disappeared without scathe to themselves, which is according to the custom of the country.”

With the political situation in Florida the Judge seemed far from pleased. Writing about some landed interests there after the admission of Florida to the Union as a State, he said: “Everything here is extremely dull. Vicious and interested men, that they might obtain office, hurried us into State government while we were vastly deficient in population and even more so in the means to support such government.”

Young Edmund Kirby Smith seems not to have seen much of these conditions of life. After he had grown to manhood he deplored that he had been deprived, since the age of twelve, of the influences of home life with father, mother and sister. Judge Smith wrote in 1845, that he had not seen his son save for five or six hours at a time, for nine years. The fact is, that despite General Kirby-Smith's later pride in the State which he claimed as his native State, the crude condition of society therein, and the unhealthiness of the climate made it undesirable as a place of residence for a family; and the family of Judge Smith was much scattered. A son, Ephraim

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Kirby Smith, had graduated from West Point at the age of nineteen, two years after the birth of Edmund. A daughter was married to Captain Webster of the United States Army and was living any where but in Florida. And Mrs. Smith was of necessity, visiting much of the time in Connecticut, with her son on the Northern frontier or with her daughter, wherever she might be.

Not only was Edmund Kirby Smith's ancestry on both sides of "fighting stock," but all his family connections were of the army. Edmund's predilections for the army and his aspirations for distinction in his chosen career, were manifested early and amounted almost to a passion. He was accordingly placed, in 1836, in the Alexandria Boarding School, of which Benjamin Hallowell was principal, and where the curriculum had admittance to the Military Academy at West Point especially in view. Alexandria was then described as in the District of Columbia. Some of the young man's reports while at this school are preserved, and show him to have made good marks in Mathematics, English Grammar, Latin, French, History, Physics, Chemistry and Drawing. In 1838, he took up the study of Botany, without giving up the interest he had previously taken in Mineralogy. Thus early did he begin the cultivation of his taste for natural science which lasted to the end of his life.

The long separation of young Edmund Kirby

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Smith from his home and from the members of his family resulted in a correspondence which has been carefully preserved apparently without the loss of any important letter. The letters upon examination prove worthy of preservation, and are the chief reliance of the present writer in the preparation of this book. The letters of Judge Smith are filled with wholesome advice and might serve as models to be followed by a father writing to his son in these days. They are all the more remarkable in view of the meager facilities for correspondence in the early times. It was before the use of envelopes became general, and the amount paid for postage was indicated—eighteen, twenty-five or fifty cents as the case might be—not by postage stamps, but in the indorsement of the postmaster. The letters of the subject of this biography to his mother are thoroughly self-revealing, the more so because written with no thought of their being preserved or read by any other person than her to whom they were addressed. They show, among other things, a deep religious tone, and that in the early youth of Edmund Kirby Smith was laid the foundation of that strong Christian character which was very marked in his later years; which placed him with Lee and “Stonewall” Jackson among the men of approved religious character to whom, as has been noted elsewhere,² the government of the Confed-

² Bishop Quintard's *Memoirs of the War*, page 1.

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erate States, as it came into existence, committed the leadership of its armies; which enabled him to bear up under the adversity which later came upon him, and, setting aside flattering offers of worldly gain, to devote himself in his latter years to the education of youth. At the age of twenty-five he writes of the gratification it gave him to reflect that, not only himself, but nearly all of his relatives were communicants of the "Catholic, Apostolic Church." A few years later he entertained serious thoughts of resigning from the army in order that he might enter the ministry of the church. Just before the beginning of the Civil War, he expressed envy of the career of a frontier missionary. And after the Civil War he gave further consideration to the claims which he felt the ministry had upon him. All this while he took pleasure in the fulfillment of his religious obligations, and not infrequently served his church as lay reader. Throughout his career he made religion the foundation of his daily life, and without being ostentatious in his religious conduct, and without a trace of fanaticism, he was faithful in the discharge of every religious duty and proved himself a noble specimen of the Christian soldier.

CHAPTER II

WEST POINT

THE zealous efforts of his relations secured for young Edmund Kirby Smith, in 1841, an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, and at the age of seventeen, a new life opened before him. Captain Webster, his brother-in-law, who had spent ten years of his life at West Point, seems to have had considerable influence with the authorities, and was helpful to the young man in many ways. He had long before begun to interest himself in the young man's preparation for the Academy. When finally entered, Edmund appears to have been happy in his work for a time. He acquired from his fellow cadets the nick-name of "Seminole" (pronounced in four syllables and with accent on the penult), derived in some way from his native territory.

Of the cadets at West Point during the years 1841 to 1845, nearly all were destined to participate within a few years in a war with Mexico; and many were to attain to prominence in the history of the country and to high rank in one army or the other engaged in the great civil war of 1861-65. The class of 1842, the first class which Edmund Kirby

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Smith saw graduated, numbered fifty-six and furnished twelve general officers for the Federal Army and eight for the Confederate Army in that great struggle. Included among the former were Pope, Rosecrans, Doubleday, John Newton and Gustavus W. Smith. Among the latter were Longstreet, Van Dorn, A. P. Stewart, Eustis, and Mansfield Lovell. The class of 1843 included Ulysses S. Grant, W. B. Franklin, C. C. Augur, and others who subsequently became general officers. The class of 1844 included Hancock and Pleasanton. The class of 1846 was the largest that had ever left the Academy up to that time, numbering seventy members, among whom were such men as George B. McClellan, Stoneman, "Stonewall" Jackson, A. P. Hill, Pickett, Maury, W. D. Smith and others who rose to special distinction in the army. With many of these, Cadet Edmund Kirby Smith must have been acquainted as well as with the class of 1847. With some of them, indeed, he formed friendships which lasted through life and were not permanently impaired by the Civil War. George W. Morgan, who entered the Academy at the same time with Edmund Kirby Smith and left two years later, was in command of the Federal forces opposed to General Kirby-Smith at Cumberland Gap in 1862. Yet so close was their friendship that Morgan sought occasion to send some presents through the lines to the Confederate General.

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Acquaintance was formed with other men destined to distinction in the Civil War. Gustavus W. Smith was Assistant Professor of Engineering in the Academy from 1844 to 1846; A. P. Stewart became Acting Professor of Mathematics; and Horatio G. Wright, who graduated second in the class of 1841, was Assistant Professor of French. Mansfield Lovell married the daughter of Colonel Plympton, a Florida friend of the Smith family. Lieutenant Joseph Hooker, of the same regiment as Lieutenant Webster, was appointed Adjutant at West Point in 1841, and not only carried certain things from Mrs. Webster to her brother, but promised to take an interest in the young cadet. He was on duty at West Point but a short time, however, and was succeeded as Adjutant by Lieutenant Irwin McDowell, who was Assistant Instructor of Infantry Tactics from 1841 to 1845, and was thus intimately related to all the cadets.

There could scarcely have been any four years in the history of West Point in which more men destined to become distinguished in the military history of our country were gathered together there than the four years in which young Edmund Kirby Smith was a cadet. Of course he failed to realize the value of the acquaintances he was then making, and that he and they were to become famous in a great civil strife that was to take place twenty years later, and that many of them were to be engaged as his enemies

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in that strife. Only to two of them does he make special reference. In his last year (1845), he refers to his roommates at No.—, North Barracks. They were William Farrar Smith and Howard; the latter “a Mississippian, full of pistols and bowie knives, but now tempered down, by the cooling effects of a northern climate, to quite a gentle and rational being;—black hair and eyes that looked through and through a person, and in his *tout ensemble* quite a handsome young man.” Of this Howard we hear but little more, save that he was in General Lee’s staff at Winchester. But of William Farrar Smith, nicknamed in his cadet days “Baldy,” and thus known throughout his career of distinction in the army, and especially in the Federal service in the Civil War, Edmund Kirby Smith was a warm friend for life. He described him then as “a Yankee by birth, but as fine a fellow as ever graced a ‘short tail.’ ”

The letters from West Point do not add much to our knowledge of Edmund Kirby Smith. Those that are preserved are principally written in his third and fourth years. He usually refers to himself as a “short tail,” that being the designation of a cadet derived from the style of his uniform. He writes of himself to his mother as an “anchorite,” and sometimes experiences seasons of ill-health and of depression and declares that he has been two or three times on the point of resigning, and has only been deterred

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by the desire to gratify his parents and obtain a diploma. His health, however, returns and he begins to watch "the few months glide by" that mark his detention "as an unwilling prisoner at the Academy."

He spent the summer holidays of 1843 with his brother, Captain Ephraim Kirby Smith, who wrote of him:

"Edmund is about my height, will be a much larger man and is very like his father in the face. He is a noble young gentleman — aimiable, well-mannered and intellectual. His standing in his class is very respectable, and his classmates say, were it not for his indolence and carelessness, he might be at the head. He has promised me that for the future he will be studious and exert himself to avoid reports for neglect or demerits. If he does, he cannot fail to be one of the five first next year and will undoubtedly graduate near the head of his class."

Some of the young cadet's letters contain a little West Point gossip, as that written in the fall of 1843:

"Mrs. Scott and her daughters have been creating quite an excitement here this encampment. Camilla, Cornelia and Ella carry the day here at present. If I were the old General, I should be dreadfully

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jealous. Mrs. Scott holds her levee to forty or fifty cadets at Kosciusko's, gives them parties, sends them fruit, cake, etc., daily, and never seems at ease till she gets a crowd of cadets (her heart's corps as she calls them) around her. She is very much liked and would make quite a popular Superintendent. From the length of time she has been here and her apparent aversion to leaving, I suspect she is partly inclined to supersede Major Delafield in the regal chair of tyranny."

In one of his letters about this time he offers to abstain from all intoxicating liquors and from playing cards, if his father requests it. In replying to the letter the father expresses surprise at the offer, as he had always supposed that the use of liquors and cards had been prohibited among the cadets. He most earnestly requests the pledge of his son, and there is nothing to indicate that the son was ever guilty of breaking his pledge, or in fact of his having been addicted at any time to the use of either cards or liquor. The presumption is that he made the offer to his father for his own protection.

Young Edmund Kirby Smith was the twelfth in his class in 1843, but in the early months of the following year he fell to the fifty-fifth and was charged with an enormous number of demerits. This caused his father much anxiety and the paternal letters are

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filled with expostulations and advice. And as the time for graduation approaches the anxiety extends to the other members of the family. All hope of the young man's graduating among the first five in his class is abandoned. At the head of the class of forty-five cadets stood William Henry Chase Whiting, a friend of Edmund Kirby Smith for many years. Other members of the class, besides the subject of this biography, who attained to prominence in the history of our country within the next few years, were Charles P. Stone, Fitz-John Porter, Thomas John Wood, David Allen Russell, T. G. Rhett, Gordon Granger, Bartow Bee and William Farrar Smith. Another member of the class was Jenifer, who had been a fellow-student at the school of Benjamin Hallowell at Alexandria, and who was subsequently associated with Edmund Kirby Smith in the service on the frontier; was the inventor of the celebrated saddle which bears his name, and was a general officer in the Confederate Army.

Trouble arose. Edmund Kirby Smith was at first refused his commission because of failure before the Medical Board of Examiners. This Board found him perfect except as to "his vision, which was tested in various ways and found so defective as to compel the Board to report unfavorably." "In the unanimous opinion of this Board," the report read, "Cadet E. K. Smith, in consequence of defective vision, being my-

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opic or near-sighted to a great degree, does not 'possess the requisite physical ability to serve the country in the arduous and laborious station of a military officer.' " The young cadet did not give up, however. At his request, the Academy Surgeon certified that at no time while at the Academy had the cadet complained of any defective vision nor was he ever excused from any of his duties therefor. The Commandant certified that the cadet had frequently had the command of a company in the batallion of cadets and that he, the Commandant, had never perceived any failure on the part of the cadet to perform his duty, either from defective vision or from any other cause. The cadet had often commanded the guard and had always performed his duty satisfactorily. The Commandant would never have known from the manner in which Cadet E. K. Smith performed his duty that he was defective in vision. The instructor in sword exercise and the instructor in riding gave similar certificates, and two members of the Examining Board finally gave certificates which secured, after a time, the desired commission. But Edmund Kirby Smith wore spectacles from that time to the day of his death. With the effective certificate came the assurance that Cadet E. K. Smith was "a general favorite with all who knew him." He was, indeed, ever a lovable character, and to this fact, testimony is added at every stage of his career.

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Mingled with the letters of condolence which he received while it was supposed that his commission was an impossibility, were expressions of relief that he had been spared army life. His brother Ephraim Kirby Smith wrote that he was not sure but that the failure to get his commission was the best thing that could happen to him. "The army in our country," wrote the elder brother, "is certainly not a desirable profession for any young man who has ability and perseverance to succeed in any other. With your talents and education, a few years of industry will most certainly place you in a position far in advance of your classmates, who will lead the enervating and indolent lives of subalterns, and I by no means desire that *my* sons should ever wear a sword. I would certainly prefer that they become honest, industrious mechanics. So, my dear brother, be not cast down. You can get a better profession than the one I fear you have lost." And his sister writes in much the same strain, and urges her brother to take up the profession of Medicine. It is perhaps strange that she did not suggest his giving his attention to Art, for he was exceedingly clever with his pencil and his sister appreciated his talent in that direction sufficiently to beg in every letter that she wrote, that he would preserve all his drawings for her.

But the delayed commission came at last, and Brevet Second Lieutenant Edmund Kirby Smith left

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West Point at the age of twenty-one. Being given the choice of the arm of the service in which he would serve, he selected the Infantry. This was a serious disappointment to his sister, Mrs. Webster, who desired him to select the Artillery so that he might be stationed near her. His father had hopes that in the infantry he might be sent to St. Augustine. He was, however, attached to the Fifth Infantry, the regiment of his brother, and with that regiment he entered upon the routine of garrison life. The regiment was then at Detroit, but with the prospect of being ordered to Fort Wilkins, on Lake Superior, "unless a declaration of war with Mexico prevented."

CHAPTER III

IN THE WAR WITH MEXICO

Matters of national importance were happening at the time of Lieutenant Edmund Kirby Smith's entrance upon army life. In the presidential campaign of 1844, the leading issue had been the annexation of Texas, and James K. Polk had been elected President upon that issue. Before his inauguration Texas was annexed and a few months later was admitted to the Union as a State. The United States thereupon became party to a dispute with Mexico over the boundary of the annexed territory. Mexico claimed that the Nueces River constituted the west boundary of Texas while the United States maintained, as Texas had claimed, that the Rio Grande was the proper boundary. President Polk ordered General Zachary Taylor to take possession of the disputed territory between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, and the General took up his position opposite Matamoras near the mouth of the Rio Grande, thus establishing a blockade. In April, 1846, the Mexicans crossed the Rio Grande and attacked some Americans. On the 8th of May, Taylor defeated a force at Palo Alto, followed the same to Resaca

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de la Palma and again defeated it. Following the Mexicans as they continued their retreat to the southern side of the Rio Grande, Taylor took possession of Matamoras. War was not declared until the 13th of May. On the 24th of September, Monterey was surrendered by the Mexicans after four days of hard fighting, and on the 23rd of February, 1847, the battle of Buena Vista was fought and a most successful campaign was brought to a close.

Meanwhile many of Taylor's troops had been transferred to the army of General Winfield Scott, which was to invade Mexico by way of Vera Cruz. On the 27th of March, 1847, Scott carried the strongest fort in Mexico (San Juan de Ulua), and the City of Vera Cruz; and advancing toward the capital, fought the battle of Cerro Gordo on the 18th of April. In August, the battles of Contreras, Churubusco and San Antonio were fought. On the 13th of September, the battle of Molino del Rey was fought and the fortress of Chapultepec was carried. The American army entered the City of Mexico the following day, and after two days of fighting were in complete possession of the Mexican capital and ready to dictate terms of peace.

Of those mentioned in the previous chapter as graduating from West Point in the years 1841-1846, nearly all received their "baptism of fire" in this "armed invasion," and "military parade" into Mex-

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ico. And as an officer, at first in the Fifth Infantry and afterwards in the Seventh Infantry, Lieutenant Edmund Kirby Smith was a participant in the campaigns of General Taylor and General Scott, successively. His brother, Captain Ephraim Kirby Smith, was also with the armies until mortally wounded at Molino del Rey. Their maternal uncle, Edmund Kirby, was first on the staff of General Taylor and afterwards on that of General Scott. Captain Webster was a participant in the campaign of General Taylor. Letters still preserved present vivid pictures of the scenes of the two campaigns. Those of Edmund Kirby Smith are written with all the fire and enthusiasm of a very young soldier. From Corpus Christi he writes to his mother on the 6th of March, 1846:

“We are on the eve of a march to the Mexican frontier, and three weeks will see our tents glistening along the banks of the Rio Grande, or our bones whitening on the plains which separate us from that famed river of the South. The prospect of active service has worked a great change in our little host. All is now bustle and excitement. The eyes of the most listless sparkle with the mention of the *Mexicano*, and our anxiety to move increases. Such sharpening of swords, repairing of firearms, such a demand for revolvers and bowie knives, Corpus Christi never saw. The dragoons were marched down to the Quar-

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termaster's and were occupied some time in grinding and sharpening their sabres. All betokens a speedy move and a decided expectation of a brush with the Mexicans ere we reach Matamoras.

"A train of wagons under Major Graham with a strong escort left five days since to establish a depot, fifty miles hence, on the route. Yesterday three runners came reporting the position of a regiment of one thousand men at the junction of the Matamoras and the Laredo trails, twenty miles beyond Graham's depot, and that five thousand troops were preparing to cross the Rio Grande. General Taylor places no reliance on these statements and thinks our establishment on the Rio del Norte will take place without opposition. We are completely in the dark as to what the next month may bring forth and ignorant of the force, intention and position of the Mexican troops; though our camp has been constantly full of their spies and they are not only acquainted with our strength and intention but know the names of our officers and even the very gossip of the camp.

"We are all prepared for the march, and can bring twenty-six hundred effective men into the field. The order of march has been published. The army will move in four columns with an interval of a day's march between them. The Second Dragoons with Ringgold's Artillery leave day after to-morrow, constituting the first column. Worth's Brigade and

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Duncan's Company, the second; McIntosh's Brigade, the third; Colonel Whistler's Brigade and a company of artillery, the fourth.

"I returned about the first of last month from a ten days' hunt up the Nueces River. We went at least thirty miles up the stream, saw myriads of game. The deer herd in thousands on the prairie. The woods are full of turkey, tigers, etc. The day after my return I was taken with a violent attack of bilious fever. It was a narrow escape that time, but I am now quite well and am rapidly recovering my strength. This is the third bilious attack I have had — two attacks of fever and one of jaundice. The climate, however, is really delightful; nor are we entirely out of the world at Corpus Christi. Two theatres, a morning paper and a line of boats to New Orleans are luxuries not to be despised. We will leave quite a pleasant station (for Texas) at Corpus Christi, and I feel quite loth to give up the luxuries and comforts we have been so long collecting around us, even for the fandangos and black-eyed señoritas of Matamoras.

"In regard to the relative merits of the Infantry and the Artillery, every day increases the conviction that my choice has been a good one. There have already been some sixteen or eighteen promotions since last June. My classmates of the Artillery are almost unanimously of the same opinion and there is scarcely one who would not willingly transfer to the Infantry."

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From the Camp opposite Matamoras, on the day that war was actually declared (May 13th, 1846), the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma having been fought, writing to his mother, he describes the scenes through which he had passed:

“I have only time to write a few lines informing you of our having passed through the fiery ordeal unscathed, and to give you a partial account of the most bloody and unparalleled victories in the annals of our country. Having partially completed our fort (a field work with six bastions), Major Brown, with the Seventh Regiment and two companies of artillery, was left in command. Two batteries of four pieces each (four eighteen-pound and four sixteen-pound) comprised its armament. On the afternoon of the 1st of May we bade adieu to our comrades of the Seventh and marched off, two thousand strong, for Point Isabel, distant thirty miles. Our scouts had reported a large force, estimated at near ten thousand, drawn up to oppose us. We continued our march till ten o'clock on the morning of the 2nd, when we encamped eight miles from Isabel, having passed the enemy's encampment in the night. We remained four days at the point, loading our teams and preparing for the return, hourly encouraged in our determination to cut our way through, by the dull heavy booming sound of our eighteen-pounder, which

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loudly proclaimed that our flag still proudly waved where our gallant comrades had placed it. On the 7th, we struck our tents and, encumbered with a heavy train, marched for Matamoras.

“On the afternoon of the 8th, we encountered the advance guard of the enemy, and found them drawn up in a strong position, having their rear and flanks strongly protected by dense chaparral, and an open prairie, covered with tall thick grass in their front. Our column was halted, the train parked, and we advanced slowly and deliberately in order of battle over the prairie to the attack. We continued the advance under a heavy cannonade from their line of eleven pieces; halted as soon as we were near enough, unlimbered and opened upon them from Duncan’s and Ringgold’s batteries, and from two eighteen-pounders which we were taking up to the fort. After half an hour’s cannonade, our regiment, which formed the extreme right, received orders to advance. A large body of cavalry with two pieces of artillery moved from their left at the same time, and at a half mile from our line, among some scattered bushes, the cavalry, upwards of five hundred strong, charged. We promptly formed a square, received their fire at thirty paces, and with perfect coolness returned it from the front attacked, emptying upwards of forty saddles, and throwing them into utter confusion; two of Ringgold’s pieces coming up at this moment, delivered their fire with

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great effect, annihilating their battery as it was opening upon our square and sweeping down numbers of their cavalry as they fled. Night put an end to their action and the battle of Palo Alto, lasting from three to half past seven o'clock, was ended by our brave troops sleeping on the field of battle.

"The Mexicans acknowledge a loss of five hundred, and one piece disabled. General Arista, the Commander-in-Chief, was wounded and several officers of rank were killed. Major Ringgold was killed. Captain John Page had his face shot away and several subalterns were slightly wounded, Lieutenant Waller among the number. About eight of our men were killed and forty wounded.

"We began our advance the next day at daylight; found the field covered with the dead and wounded of the enemy, and several graves, where during the night they had buried some of their dead. We continued the advance nine miles under a burning sun; and at half past two o'clock came upon their camp, a very strong position where, with a reinforcement of two thousand, they had entrenched themselves; their force now consisted of about eight thousand regular troops (the rancheros having deserted them), and nine pieces of artillery. Here they had long contemplated fighting us. A deep ravine, rendered difficult of passage by a marshy slough extending along it, formed their front, while all approaches through the open

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chapparal were raked by their batteries established at different points. They had thrown up embankments, and their rear was protected by a dense chapparel.

“The Fifth Regiment led the advance, deployed on the left of the road, the Fourth on the right. The order was soon given for the Fifth to take the batteries of the enemy and gallantly did they make the charge. All now became confusion. The different regiments became mixed and intermingled in the dense chaparral through which they rushed; and collected in small parties, commanded generally by younger and more active officers they pushed on yelling, shouting, killing and carrying everything before them. I never saw such perfect demons in all my life as our men became; they rushed through the showers of grape, round and canister, to the very mouths of the enemy’s pieces, bayoneted their artillerymen, completely routed the infantry drawn up for the support of the batteries; capturing every piece, some fifteen hundred stands of arms, 240,000 rounds of musket cartridges, all their camp equipage and five or six hundred pack mules. Plunder of every kind and description was brought in, but every article, from a knife to a twelve-pounder has been delivered up by order of General Taylor; even the very coats our men had on their backs were given up without a murmur, for they lost most of their clothes in the first action.

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“Less than fourteen hundred of our troops were brought into action. The whole artillery battalion was in reserve, and a large part of the Third did not have an opportunity for firing a shot. The Mexicans fought bravely, fell at their posts, were bayoneted at their pieces and formed piles of dead within their entrenchments before they gave way. One regiment, the Tampico Guarda Costa, the best in the Mexican service, was completely cut to pieces. They would not retreat but fell at their posts; their Colonel was shot and taken prisoner. Most of their officers and men were killed or taken. General La Vega is a prisoner. The Mexicans estimate their loss at one thousand besides forty-eight officers. Their loss in killed, wounded and missing cannot be less than two thousand. They had not calculated at all upon defeat and had made no preparations for a retreat, and five hundred cavalry sent to the ferry (across the Rio Grande) could have taken their whole army, for they threw down their arms and fled in confusion. Nor have we followed up our success. General Taylor left for Point Isabel, giving Colonel Twiggs orders to act strictly upon the defensive.

“A complete panic for three days existed over at Matamoras. The Mexicans would have surrendered on summons, and Colonel Marino, two days since, crossed over and informed Colonel Twiggs that any town on the other side would surrender to two hun-

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dred men on summons. On General Taylor's return we shall probably march into the country.

"Thus ended the battle of Resaca de la Palma, a victory without its equal in our history, and fought without the aid of militia."

A week later he wrote from the city of Matamoras:

"You may now banish all concern for our safety. The war is pretty much over. Two thousand men, were it our policy, could with ease march to the City of Mexico. Never were a people so completely cut up, so panic-stricken, as the Mexicans now are. All their energies, all their resources have been expended upon one grand effort. For more than a year they have been preparing for this occasion. They have staked their all upon the turn of a die, and at one fell swoop they have been laid perfectly helpless. In the battle of the 8th, which lasted from half-past two in the afternoon till dark, the Mexicans acknowledge the loss of five hundred killed; two pieces of artillery; besides the desertion of a large body of cavalry. Our loss was between forty and fifty killed and wounded. This great disparity in loss is owing to the destructive effect with which our artillery was served; the shrapnel shells sometimes bursting in the very midst of the enemy's entrenchments. With a reinforcement of nearly two thousand, they confi-

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dently expected our destruction. We stormed their works, captured all their artillery, and entirely routed a force of 7,180 regular troops. Five hundred, with their priest, were drowned in crossing the Rio Grande. Our men expected no quarter and fought with perfect desperation. It was a hand-to-hand conflict — a trial of personal strength in many instances. Where the bayonet failed, the fists even were used. (Kirby, in the thickest of the fight, got tired of using his sword, and knocked a man down with his fist). But in moral courage as well as in personal strength we were far their superiors, and have given them a lesson which ages cannot obliterate.

“We lost 180 killed and wounded in the two actions of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. The Mexicans acknowledge a loss of 2,500 in the same. Of the Tampico Guarda Costa, the regiment which fought so bravely and fell so manfully at their pieces, but twenty-six escaped to tell the tale. With General Arista’s baggage were plans of the campaign, maps of the country and all his instructions from the War Department. By these we learn that a force of nearly 14,000 regular troops had been sent to the frontier, 5,000 under Bustamante higher up the river. Nine thousand under Arista were to destroy General Taylor’s army. The two divisions under General Arista were to unite at San Antonio and push the war to the Sabine. We understand, too,

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that a division and disposal of our baggage had been made previous to the action, so confident were they of victory. And the inhabitants say no quarter would have been given had we lost the day. General Taylor returned to Point Isabel, while the army camped on their old ground opposite this city.

“On the 18th we crossed the Rio Bravo del Norte, and had we been opposed, most destructive would have been the consequences. The river was nearly two hundred yards wide, deep and with a rapid current. It took nearly ten hours to pass our little force of eighteen hundred men over. We found that General Arista, after destroying all the public property possible, had made a precipitate retreat toward Monterey. His force was nearly four thousand, but in a dreadful state of mutiny and disorganization, deserting him at every opportunity. Stragglers are daily coming in and delivering themselves up. They report to-day that General Arista is a prisoner, charged with having delivered up the army to General Taylor.

“Our troops are encamped around the city, while the Star Spangled Banner proudly floats over the works. We have already found secreted in the town, one mortar, some field pieces, a magazine of ammunition — shells, grenades, etc., besides a great many stands of muskets, and we are getting on the track of more artillery, which has been thrown into the river.

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The dragoons and ninety mounted rangers were immediately sent in pursuit of General Arista, intending to give him a big scare. We are expecting orders to move in a few days — only waiting for the volunteers, none of whom have yet arrived. It is said that we shall occupy the Rio Grande frontier, headquarters being Monterey, and with reinforcements carry the war into the interior.

“Matamoras is quite a large city, with enough able-bodied men in it, had they only the courage, to whip the very command which is now encamped around it. The streets are narrow, the houses built in the Moorish style with flat roofs, terraced floors and thick walls. There is a large plaza in the center of the town. The inhabitants, with few exceptions, are a mixture of Indian, Negro and Spanish blood, apparently a great deal below and more ignorant than either race. A respectable part of the population, especially the women, have moved into the interior.

“Captain Webster has arrived with one company of the First Artillery, from Fort Pickens, and has been ordered to Barita, eighteen miles below, where the First Infantry and some volunteers are stationed.”

On the 18th of August, the following letter was written from Comargo:

“The Eighth Regiment and the Artillery have received orders to begin the movement toward Monte-

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rey this afternoon; the Fifth and Seventh to hold themselves in readiness for the march on the morrow. These two brigades, under General Worth, constitute the Second Division. The Third, Fourth, First and Second, under Twiggs, form the First Brigade, which moves on Twiggs' arrival. We are all busily engaged in making our preparations for crossing the mountains. We are in fine health and excellent spirits. The camp resounds with the heavy hum of our voices; jokes and hilarity circle round; while with that carelessness—that recklessness of the future which seems characteristic of the soldier's life—all seem busily engaged with their mules, mustangs, and Mexican *amigos*, in preparing for some pleasure excursion. Nor will we be disappointed in soon engaging in some grand ball which comes off soon at Monterey; for the General sits cross-legged in his tent, as grum as an old bear—sure indication of the coming storm. We are leaving a beautiful camp, which stretches for more than a mile along the banks of the San Juan; but without regret, for we all long for the mountain winds—the bracing breezes of the Sierra.

“The Mexicans have not yet recovered from the panic of the 9th, and though they have been making preparations for our reception at Monterey, have been concentrating large reinforcements and collecting stores and munitions of war, I really believe we will

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enter the city without opposition. Major Duncan, with thirty rangers, has just returned from a successful scout. He pushed on to within sight of Monterey, surrounded nearly three hundred Mexicans at a fandango (principally Seguin's men); and though Colonel Ramirez had escaped (the principal object of the expedition being his capture), he fully exemplified the cowardice of the Mexican rancheros, for no opposition was made, and Duncan returned safely, though without Ramirez. Two of the Mexicans attempted to escape but were shot. One was an officer."

On the 24th of September, he wrote from "*El Ciudad de Monterey*" as follows:

"After four days of hard fighting, I find myself in Don Garcia's house, where our brave fellows picked their way yesterday morning. Complete masters of the city after a bloody struggle, we have, I believe, fought our last fight with the Mexicans. General Taylor and General Ampudia have signed an armistice of eight weeks, the Mexicans to march out with all the honors of war, with their arms, six pieces of artillery and fifteen days' rations. Their line of march to the interior is laid down, and General Taylor is to advance one thousand men and a battery of artillery to the Paso del Rinconado, thirty miles on

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the road to Saltillo. Seventy-five hundred regular soldiers, two thousand irregulars and thirty-one pieces of artillery were included in the capitulation. The enemy evacuated a strong position on the plaza in the center of the town, with a large permanent work (a bastion fort well mounted with artillery and defended by a large garrison). Previous to our arrival their forces numbered nearly twelve thousand effective men. Two thousand cavalry were sent to the interior as unnecessary in the defence. Others deserted; but on our arrival with six thousand men, their force was between eight and nine thousand, with forty-one pieces of artillery.

“We arrived within three miles of the city on the 19th. Two divisions remained with General Taylor to attack in front, while the third marched to the rear and attacked the heights which commanded the city, from that point. General Worth’s division comprising the Fifth, Seventh and Eighth Artillery battalions and two batteries of artillery, were assigned the post of danger, the attack of the heights in rear of the town; and assisted by the Texas Rangers, most skilfully, gallantly and successfully did the General carry height after height till he finally established himself firmly in the center of the town.

“Monterey is a handsome city, situated in a beautiful valley. Nature has done much to make it impregnable and render it an important position. Com-

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manded in rear by almost inaccessible heights, surmounted by batteries; with batteries and a large bastion fort in front and a superior garrison of regulars in the town, we have much reason to congratulate ourselves, that without a siege train, with inferior force and separated from our supplies, we have successfully obtained possession of this point.

“General Taylor’s two divisions captured a battery of four pieces, but were repulsed from the town with tremendous loss. The Third Infantry, the First Infantry and Baltimore Battalion were literally cut to pieces. . . . Their whole loss in killed and wounded was nearly five hundred. General Worth, with consummate skill, carried each height with its battery, stormed the Bishop’s Palace (where he captured four pieces), successfully advanced to the town, driving the Mexicans before him into the plaza, cut them off from their communications, and the glory of the capitulation is chiefly due to him.

“We have in our division attained great ends — important results with but trifling loss. . . . In the march of our division on the heights, our advance with the rangers had a severe fight with a large body of cavalry, killing the Colonel and a Captain, and entirely dispersing the Jalisco Regiment of Lancers. Uncle Edmund [Kirby] was acting on General Taylor’s staff on the day of their desperate struggle. The portion of the town they entered presents a fearful spectacle.

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The pavements are torn up; the walls and trees cut in pieces by the artillery. Our men were shot from the tops of the houses, each of which is a fort in itself. Their artillery swept the streets with a destructive fire. A great mistake was made somewhere. Two divisions were marched into town, against stone walls, with nothing in the whole command for breaking into a house. Even Yankees can't butt down stone walls, and every Spanish house is built like a fort. Our officers fell and died like heroes. Captain Williams' last words were: 'Give my friends my dying regards and tell them I fell at the head of the column.'

"Thirty-six pieces of artillery have been turned over to us by the Mexicans; more than 4,000 of the regular force have already marched out. More than 2,000 with some militia yet remain. I saw some five or six regiments reviewed in the plaza yesterday. One regiment in particular was composed of the finest looking body of men I ever cast eyes on, in perfect discipline and well armed. We have taken plenty of ammunition; and how such men in superior force, with plenty of artillery and ammunition, could have surrendered, surpasses my comprehension."

The next interesting letter is dated in Victoria, January 5th, 1847:

"Since I last wrote, I have taken my leave of the Fifth Regiment and of [brother] Kirby, and with the

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Seventh, of Fort Brown memory, to which I have been promoted, I passed my Christmas and New Year in tramping over the rocky hills and wastes of Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas. The Seventh is attached to the Division of Regulars which arrived here yesterday, nearly two thousand strong, and with General Quitman's division of volunteers, nearly three thousand, and General Patterson's command, nearly sixteen hundred. It was General Taylor's intention to march upon Santa Barbara, and after being joined by our artillery and reinforcements from Tampico, to move on the San Luis road for Tula, where the Mexicans have fortified themselves in force, and, with artillery under General Urea, await our approach. The arrival of General Scott throws a new weight into the scale, and will probably make an entire change in the plan of the campaign. Everything now seems involved in doubt and mystery. General Taylor is at a loss to know what to do, and knows not what orders he may receive; has suspended his movements and declares he will not move from Victoria till he receives orders from General Scott. Moreover, we now learn that there is no practicable route across the Sierra from Tampico to San Luis. An army, to reach a vital point in Mexico, must pass by way of Vera Cruz or through Saltillo. General Urea endeavored to cross his artillery over the mountains from Tula, but finding it impracticable, he was compelled

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to give up Victoria without striking a blow in its defense. His cavalry evacuated the city the day before General Quitman entered.

“Our distance from Monterey is eighty leagues. We made the march in thirteen days, two of which, owing to unavoidable detentions, we remained encamped on the road. We passed through three large towns averaging five thousand inhabitants (Cadereita, Morelos, and Linares), besides several villages and haciendas. The road skirts along, at ten or fifteen miles from the base of the Sierra, and excepting in the neighborhood of the towns and haciendas, which lie along water courses, through a dry, parched and unproductive country is entirely destitute of trees, but abounding in rocks and the thorny chaparral bush.

“At the towns and haciendas, where the country admits of irrigation, the orange, lime, lemon and various other trees and fruits, flourish in all the exuberance of a tropical clime. Fields of cotton, coffee and sugar-cane, the broad leafed banana, with the dark, rich foilage of orange and aguacate, there greet our arrival after a long and toilsome day’s march over a dusty waste. The little knowledge of Spanish picked up at Monterey from my hospitable acquaintances in that city made me friends all along the road. I left that city with much regret, for I had become very much attached to many of my Monterey friends.

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Never in my life had I met so much real kindness, warmth of feeling and interest in my welfare, as several of my friends there evinced. They were constantly giving me proofs of their regard, sending me sweet-meats and other nice things; and during my sickness, an old lady, who always called me her son, visited me and attended at my bedside with all the interest and anxiety that a mother could manifest. I found a great deal of refinement, some talent and education, with a kindness of heart and warmth of feeling quite universal among the higher classes. I lived for six months with Don Jesus Prieto, a *licenciado* (or lawyer), a scientific man, rich, of considerable talents, good education, and well known for his charity and benevolent feelings. He was long time the *diputado* from the Department of Nuevo Leon, and was at one time President of Congress. Under the patronage of his interesting family, I soon became acquainted with all the *buenos y decentes* of Monterey. But great is the contrast between the educated class and the great body of the people, who are plunged in ignorance and superstition, and much darker in morals than they are in complexion.

“Victoria, the capital of Tamaulipas, lies at the base of the Sierra Madre, distant about eighty leagues from the three principal cities of Eastern Mexico — Monterey, Tampico and Matamoras. Its population is about 4,000, and like all Mexican towns, speaks of

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times gone by. Old and ruined houses, dilapidated walls, crumbling churches, or the unfinished foundations of some magnificent cathedral, meet the view on every side. A miserable, ignorant and beggarly people, half naked, lounging around or squatting like Indians, at the street corners and on the main plaza, form two-thirds of the population of the towns east of the Sierra, and of the ranchos — the peons of the haciendas of the rich. The whole country from Monterey to Matamoras' and Tampico exhibits a people lapsing deeper and deeper into ignorance and superstition. Ruined houses, deserted fields and ranchos, crumbling cathedrals and the dilapidated condition of the towns, all mark how great has been the decrease in population, how rapid the decline since the rule of the Spanish. Indeed the inhabitants all refer to the times of the Spanish Governor as those of peace and plenty. Then, at least, they were secure from the depredations of the *Indio*.

"Our regiment is now under orders to put itself in readiness to move at a moment's warning. It is supposed to feel its way to Santa Barbara."

Letters from others about this time speak of Lieutenant Edmund Kirby Smith as a "gallant, glorious fellow and a universal favorite," and quote General Taylor as pronouncing him "a very promising officer." When the plans of General Scott had devel-

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oped, the young lieutenant left Victoria for the coast, where, on the brig "Potter" of the fleet of transports, he sailed with a large portion of the army for Vera Cruz. He was in Twiggs' Brigade on the extreme left of the line of investment of the city. His brother, Captain Ephraim Kirby Smith, was in Worth's Brigade on the right. After the taking of Vera Cruz, the latter was sent on an expedition to ascend the river at Alvarado, eighty miles; to take possession of the country and secure, by purchase, horses and mules for the transportation of the army. Lieutenant Edmund Kirby Smith's account of the operations at Vera Cruz is given in a letter to his mother written from that city on the 3rd of April, 1847:

"We have just achieved a result, stupenduous in itself and grand through the influence it must have on our future operations; and most joyfully do we hail it as the harbinger of a change in the system hitherto pursued in our campaign. Rashness, unflinching determination and bull-dog courage, have achieved results glorious for our arms, honorable for the Nation, and I may almost say, unparalleled in the history of the world. But how much more glorious would it have been, how much more satisfactory for the country and to ourselves, had they been obtained without the loss of so much blood, and the sacrifice of so

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many valuable lives. Science, with the long and sad experience of the other continent, teaches what is truly the military maxim, that the greatness of the victory is measured, not by the immensity of the loss on either side, but by the accomplishment of the result with the smallest possible loss. Had we stormed the City of Vera Cruz, we could have only surmounted its walls by a sacrifice of little short of 3,000 lives.

“Our fleet of transports anchored at Anton Lizardo, twelve miles from the city, early in March. On the 9th we made our landing at Sacrificios, three miles from the guns of the castle San Juan de Ulua. General Worth’s Brigade formed the first line or right, comprising the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Eighth Infantry, Second and Third Artillery, with the Marines, Sappers and Miners and Rocketiers. General Patterson’s Division of Volunteers, the second line; the remainder of the regulars, including the the Rifles, under General Twiggs, formed the third line or left wing of the army. The surf boats of the first line struck the beach in beautiful order, and, headed by the gallant Worth, 3,000 men moved up to their position amid deafening cheers from the fleet and transports, and the soul-inspiring strains of our Navy band. By eleven at night, our whole army was landed and the doom of Vera Cruz was sealed.

“On the morning of the 11th, General Twiggs’

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Brigade moved for its position on the extreme left, distant seven miles through thickets and marshes and over sand hills. We were three days in arriving in position, our advance continually skirmishing with light troops of the enemy, while their heavy shot and shell were occasionally flying over our heads. It was on our first day's march that Captain Albertes was killed by an eighteen-pound shot taking off his head. I was immediately in rear, heard with fearful foreboding the heavy fall of shot in front, and found myself passing over the remains of the gallant captain, while the surgeon was busy taking off the leg of one of his men who fell by the same shot. We moved on rapidly, leaving a few men to bury the brave man where he fell, and with a silent prayer for his soul, all was soon forgotten—even that such might soon be the fate of any one of us.

“We debouched on the Jalapa road at a little Mexican village where we captured a convoy of provisions (wine and cattle) going into the city. And what with cattle, mules, *arrieros*, the frightened inhabitants running for their lives, the shouts and huzzas of our half-starved men as they dashed into the deserted ranchos, was presented one of those Peninsular scenes so admirably depicted by Lover's inimitable pen. We endeavored to restore order, when I saw one of my men coming out of a house with a well-stored bag of *piloncillo*, or Mexican sugar. I raised my sword

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and put on a most ferocious look, when his extended bag of the much desired sweets, and his offer, 'Will the Lieutenant take some?' completely subdued my indignation; and with the request for him to take his place in ranks, I divided the spoils with Captain Paul.

"We opened our first battery on the 22nd of March, and on the 28th the terms of the capitulation were drawn up, and on the 29th the Star Spangled Banner floated over the walls of Ulua and the fortifications of Vera Cruz. Our loss has been but trifling—two officers and some twenty or thirty men killed and wounded. Captain Vinton was killed by a shell while superintending the work of the trenches. At the time our fire ceased we had ten mortars in position, seven in operation with several batteries of heavy artillery, but their execution on the town was terrific. Some three or four hundred citizens, men, women and children were killed or wounded. The open part of the city is completely in ruins. The Cathedral of Mercy is much injured—almost a ruin, while the custom house with other public buildings and churches, are more or less injured. The fortress of San Juan de Ulua is a formidable work, impregnable to all but starvation, rising out of the ocean six hundred yards from the city. With its outworks, four bastions and water battery, it mounts more than two hundred pieces of heavy artillery and mortars,

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among which are many eighty-four and sixty-eight pounders and heavy Paixhan guns.

“The town, which contains many fine buildings and churches, and presents altogether quite an imposing appearance, is surrounded by a wall ten feet high and flanked by numerous forts placed at intervals along the line. By the terms of the capitulation, 4,000 prisoners, more than 400 pieces of artillery, with a large amount of stores, shot, shell, arms, etc., fell into our possession. Some 5,000 men, including Twiggs’ Division and a brigade of volunteers, are now under orders for La Puente Nacional (the National Bridge), a strong position thirty miles distant, defended by two permanent works and heavy artillery; and where, it is said, the Mexicans are concentrating for another stand. General Patterson goes in command, with twelve pieces of heavy artillery and two mortars. A force has taken Alvarado, and one, under Colonel Harney, has gone to Antigua.”

A letter written about this time by Captain Edmund Kirby describes the conquest of Vera Cruz and of the Castle of San Juan de Ulua as “a great achievement, purchased at little cost, except indeed the loss of poor Vinton, whose life was valuable beyond price. He was killed in the trenches by a shell. That evening, to the staff circle at his tent, General Scott pronounced the most feeling and eloquent eulogium on

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the deceased I ever listened to. Every heart was full, every eye glistened."

"A bombardment," this interesting letter continues, "is a new phase in the experience of us all. It is a sublime spectacle. The fire from our batteries was kept up incessantly day and night, from the 22nd to the 26th of March. We opened with seven mortars and closed with twenty-six mortars and heavy guns. The fire was returned by the enemy from a much larger number of guns. At night the scene was awful. Imagine the air filled with shells crossing each other in every direction, their courses traceable by their burning fuses, mounting majestically to a great height, pausing an instant in their flight and then descending with great velocity upon the devoted city; exploding as they reached the ground and spreading death and destruction in every direction. Falling upon the flat roofs, which they crushed, and exploding within the walls, the effect was terrible. The crash of the timbers and the shrieks and moans of the poor victims within the town, were heard distinctly in our trenches, and filled even our rough soldiers with awe.

"When we entered the city the terrible effect of our fire was plainly visible. Hardly a building in the city was untouched. Whole blocks were reduced to heaps of ruins. Every building in the city is of stone with flat roof. Frequently the roof and furniture

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being mingled in a mass, would take fire, leaving only blackened walls. The streets were obstructed by heaps of rubbish ejected from the ruined buildings by the bursting shells.

“This morning I visited a church which was pierced by forty or fifty shot and shell—a splendid edifice, richly ornamented by splendidly clad images of saints and martyrs and all the appliances of Romish worship. It was a shocking sight. The images shattered, the showy ornaments of the altar torn away; banners for show days, priests’ robes, ornaments of all descriptions, illuminated books, and all the paraphernalia of worship, where worship consists only of empty show, were thrown on the floor, mingled with broken plaster and stone and fragments of shell in utmost confusion. It was known that the Mexicans were in the habit of storing ammunition in their churches. In this church were huge piles of Mexican cannon balls and in the bomb-proof vaults (used sometimes for the punishment of the wicked) were stored large quantities of fixed ammunition. If a shell had exploded in this the explosion would have been awful.

“This is war in its most dread form, hardly surpassed by the terrors of assault. I pray God I may never have occasion to witness another bombardment. It will, however, have the good effect of striking terror into the other cities of Mexico, and I much doubt

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if any other will subject itself to a similar visitation. We shall take a battery of mortars with us as we advance, but I think the gates of Jalapa and Perote will be opened to us without our using them.

“We think it fortunate that the enemy surrendered. In our hands, the Castle could not have been taken. It is a fortress of immense strength, mounting 130 guns of very heavy calibre. The Navy are in favor of blowing it up and not leaving one stone upon another.

“The opinion prevails in camp that the glorious victory of Taylor at Buena Vista and the fall of the important city and post of Vera Cruz with the Castle of San Juan de Ulua, will satisfy the Mexicans that they are playing a losing game, and dispose them to peace. . . . It is reported that Santa Anna has coalesced with the priests, who it is supposed will prefer peace to supporting the war by contributions from their own property, and that the Union and Santa Anna and the Church will form a government strong enough to make peace. For the great difficulty is that the war party is powerful enough to overthrow almost any government that advocates peace. Our wish is perhaps father to the thought. My peace predictions have failed so often that I am not over sanguine now, but I do wish to get out of the country.

“I must not forget to tell you about the Orizaba,

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whose lofty peak, clad in eternal snow, refreshes my sight every clear morning when I put my head out of my tent. It is upward of sixty miles distant, yet in a clear atmosphere can be distinctly seen. The snow glittering in the morning sun, while the line dividing it from the verdure of eternal spring which clothes the sides of the mountain, is distinctly visible; and the base is parched with the heat of eternal summer."

On the 26th of April, Captain Ephraim Kirby Smith wrote from Jalapa a brief letter to his mother, telling her that he was not in the severe contest at Cerro Gordo, but that his Uncle Edmund Kirby and his brother, "Ted" (Edmund Kirby Smith), were. "Doctor McLaren," wrote Captain Kirby Smith, "who was with Ted, told me last evening that when the action commenced, Ted was sick in bed; and that in spite of his remonstrances, he got up and went to his duty; and, as he ever will, he fought most gallantly." "I am happy to have it in my power to state," wrote Lieutenant Colonel Plympton of the Seventh Infantry, to the General-in-Chief, in his report of the movements of his regiment in that battle, "that such facts have been presented to me within the last day or two as to leave no doubt (even if one previously existed) that Second Lieutenant E. K. Smith, Seventh Infantry, was, if not the first, one of the first officers of the Seventh Infantry in the enemy's works

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on Telegraph Heights on the morning of the 18th of April; in whose case I am gratified in having an opportunity of conveying his name, with the facts connected, to the General-in-Chief, and as an officer of much merit and promise."

"Ted" was, in fact, brevetted for his gallantry at Cerro Gordo, and a few days after that battle he was ordered back from Jalapa to Plan del Rio to assist in removing the wounded and to escort them to Jalapa. His gallantry won him another brevet at the battle of Contreras, and he went on with the ever victorious army up to the City of Mexico. His conduct in the series of battles which led up to the occupation of the Mexican capital is incidentally referred to in the letter of Colonel Kirby, his uncle, who wrote from Tacubaya on the 12th of September, 1847, the details of the last hours of Captain Ephraim Kirby Smith, after the battle of Molino del Rey:

"The illness of Lieutenant Colonel C. F. Smith,³ devolved the command of the Light Battalion upon Kirby, and he led it to the attack on the enemy's lines

³ Charles Ferguson Smith, Commandant of Cadets at West Point until 1842, and Edmund Kirby Smith's Instructor of Infantry Tactics, afterwards Major General United States Volunteers. Not "Baldy," Cadet Kirby Smith's classmate and roommate.

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in Molino del Rey at the foot of Chapultepec, at dawn on the 8th instant. The conflict was the most bloody and obstinately contested of the whole series from Palo Alto down. Our arms triumphed over the fearful odds of six to one. But at what a price was the battle won! The list of fallen embraces some of the most shining names among the band of heroes that compose this army.

“Kirby led on his battalion with a gallantry that commands the admiration of the whole army. He fell at its head in the moment of victory. A musket ball struck him in the left eye and passed out at the left ear. He fell, as if dead, among the stones, severely contusing the right side of his face. The wound was not necessarily mortal, for the ball in its passage did not touch the brain, and the fatal result was in some measure owing to the contusion from the fall. I had him removed to my quarters in Tacubaya, a little more than a mile from the spot where he fell, and had his wounds dressed and every possible care bestowed upon him. But in vain. He lingered until four o’clock yesterday afternoon, when his spirit took flight, and we consigned his mortal remains to the earth—the Rev. Mr. McCarty, our most worthy and respected Chaplain, reading the solemn burial service of our Church.

“He received his wound early in the morning of the 8th. It was at first dressed by Dr. Simmons

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and afterwards carefully attended by the Surgeon General, several other surgeons aiding him by their counsel. Throughout the 9th, we all indulged some hopes of his recovery, though his efforts to talk were painful, for he could not articulate distinctly and his perceptions were not clear. He, however, recognized me, and throwing his arms around my neck, exclaimed, 'My dear Uncle Edmund.' Then, his mind evidently dwelling upon the last scene of his activity, he said to me, 'Uncle, I tried to do it, I tried to do it. I tried to push ahead, but they almost killed me.' On the 10th, his sufferings were intense till at evening, when he fell into a lethargic sleep from which he could not be roused. On the morning of the 11th, he was removed on the shoulders of men of his company to Miscoique (Mixcoac), a neighboring village two miles distant, where the depot and general hospital is established and where all the sick and wounded men were carried by order of the General-in-Chief, in contemplation of a movement of the troops from this place, which is, indeed, under the guns of the enemy. The removal did not effect him injuriously. Dr. Satterlee and myself accompanied him, and we established him comfortably in the quarters of Lieutenant Caldwell, of the Marine Corps. He sank to rest without rallying or rousing from his slumbers.

"Edmund, who was at the advance post, Piedad, near the city, came to his brother as often as he

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could at my quarters, and arrived at Miscoique a short time after his decease, when he remained all night and until after the funeral services this morning. Edmund, noble, generous fellow, is most deeply distressed, and constantly laments that he himself was not the victim. He has borne himself with the most distinguished gallantry in all the battles, and is loved and admired by all; but his rank is too low for him to be benefitted by his gallantry as he ought.

“Kirby, the noble, brave fellow, did ‘try to push ahead;’ and sacrificed his life to a sense of duty, in an exhibition of daring courage and gallantry unsurpassed on any occasion. He displayed equal gallantry before the *tete du pont* at Churubusco in the great battle of Mexico, the 20th of August, when he rallied the battalion under a dreadful fire at a critical moment, and where his conduct was the theme of universal admiration; but, though then exposed to a most dreadful fire, he fortunately escaped unhurt. He fairly earned, the voice of the army accorded him, and the Government must have conferred upon him, had he lived, the brevet of Major for the 20th of August, and of Lieutenant Colonel for the 8th of September. But alas, these empty honors are buried in his untimely grave.

“The records of history do not show a more devoted band of patriots than this heroic army, which is now battling for victory. It may be that we shall

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be reduced to struggling for our lives ere long The world will marvel that a government controlling the destinies of 20,000,000 of people should send an army of less than 10,000 men, three hundred miles from the coast into the midst of 7,000,000 of people and against a capital of 200,000 inhabitants, bitterly hostile in their feelings and defended by a well-appointed army of 32,000 men; and leave its brave soldiers to conquer or die, while it falsely proclaims, through its official organ, that the operating army numbers upwards of 20,000 men. This army can conquer any fighting force the enemy can array against it. It can fight its way into the capital; but it cannot afford to lose the brave men each victory costs, and we have not sufficient numbers to overcome the villainous population by which we shall be surrounded after we enter the capital.”

Eleven days later, Colonel Kirby wrote from the National Palace, in the City of Mexico, as follows:

“Another glorious victory—or rather several—won on the 13th, have given us possession of the famed capital of the Aztecs. The Mexican army is dispersed and the government dissolved; but the people remain bitterly hostile, and we are perhaps as far from peace as at the outset. If this war is to be prosecuted, the government of the United States

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must at once and without any delay send a new army of 5,000 men to Mexico. The people of this God-forsaken, priest-ridden country are demi-savages, incapable of appreciating generous treatment, and only to be controlled by the iron hand of power. We must either leave them to go to destruction their own gait, or coerce them by the strong arm of power. There is no middle course.

"There are many wonders for the curious to be seen here. My duties engage all my time. I have, however, just seen the renowned Zodiac or Astronomical Stone, which from its undoubted Aztec origin, I regard as the most remarkable memento in that interesting race, and the most curious relic in Mexico. I occupy rooms in the Palace of the Secretary of War and Marine, which are furnished sumptuously and overlook the Grand Plaza. So that I am, in fact, in what are deemed to be the Halls of the Montezumas. But the Montezumas had as little to do with them as the man in the moon. Edmund is well. I see him every day. He will not write you now for want of opportunity. Our only chance for sending letters is by smuggling them into the valise of the courier of the British Legation. But I hope, before long, we shall be released from this state of bondage."

CHAPTER IV

WEST POINT AGAIN

PEACE was established between the United States and Mexico by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, signed in February, 1848, and the American troops began the evacuation of the country. In the April following, Colonel Edmund Kirby was in Washington, urging upon all his acquaintances in Congress the passage of a pension bill providing for the widows and orphans of the army. He wrote to his sister upon a sheet of paper which he had evidently secured while he was comfortably ensconced in the luxuriously furnished apartments of the Mexican Secretary of War and Marine; for the ornately engraved heading of the sheet reads: "*Correspondencia Particular del Ministro de Estado y del Despacho de Guerra y Marino, Palacio Nacional de Mexico á . . .*"

The more interesting portion of his letter, however, is the statement that a very long list of names was before Congress for brevets, and among them was that of Edmund Kirby Smith for First Lieutenant. His uncle was making an effort to provide for the further nomination of the said Edmund Kirby Smith

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for Captain; and General Twiggs, who was then in Washington, was adding the weight of his influence with the same end in view. Eventually, these efforts were successful.

Judge Smith had died at his home in Florida, on the 27th of May, 1846, while the preparations for carrying the campaign into Mexico were in progress. Nearly a year later, his son Edmund, on the eve of the march towards the Mexican capital, wrote from Vera Cruz to the executor of his father's estate offering to meet, within a year, all claims made on the estate, in order that it might be freed from all encumbrances and be enabled to pay to his mother, the widow, all its income. At the same time he enclosed a check for his mother's use. This was an earnest of his filial conduct throughout his mother's life.

Returning to the United States after the peace was signed, Brevet Captain Edmund Kirby Smith went to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and into garrison life. In a letter to his mother, dated November 18th, 1848, he described garrison life at the Barracks as follows:

“We, some time since, regularly entered upon the routine of garrison life—drill, guard and dress parade; the billiard room after breakfast, and a visit to the ladies in the evening. What a contrast to the excite-

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ments and incidents of the three past years! Then it was that to live was to know how to appreciate living. Now, automaton-like, we involuntarily glide through the same monotonous scene, needing only, like the works of a watch, to be wound up each twenty-four hours, when away we spin, tickety-tick, till the stirring notes of reveille again wind up our rickety machinery for a repetition of the same daily revolution. No remedy now remains for us but to fall in love, and most truly do the young officers, or as our worthy Colonel styles them, 'the young gentlemen in commission,' appreciate the state of affairs; for, from the assiduity of their attentions, they seem determined to be as successful in love as they have proved themselves invincible in war.

"When I tell you that St. Louis is only ten miles from the Barracks, you will no doubt say 'What lucky Infantry fellows, to be stationed thus within reach of the luxuries of civilized life! How much too good for a doughboy!' Notwithstanding its location, the Barracks are anything but a desirable station. The quarters are mean and miserable, the worst even in the most western line of infantry posts. The situation is bleak and cold, upon the bluffs of the Mississippi; and in the fall it is extremely unhealthy. This is the opinion generally entertained of Jefferson Barracks. I myself look upon it in quite a different light. I am much pleased with my position and con-

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sider myself a fixture, for two or three years at least, with the prospect of gradually arranging around us all the luxuries of civilized life. I have already furnished my quarters in a style quite creditable to bachelor apartments.

“Speaking of quarters, you can have no idea of the scratching and pulling there has been here this fall about them. Besides the Seventh and Eighth, two or three companies of Dragoons and several Rifles, we have had here six or eight unattached members of the Medical Corps, the General Staff, Chaplain, and several other interlopers. Garrets have been in great demand, while subalterns have stood but a poor chance in the general scramble. Thanks to the kindness of Loring, I have been perfectly independent of all the manœuvering, moving and counter-moving of quarters. By virtue of his rank he is entitled to two suites of rooms. He gives me one and takes the other himself. No one now under the rank of Colonel can turn me out of my domicile. Colonel Loring is an excellent fellow, and notwithstanding his citizen appointment, has won the esteem and respect of all by his gentlemanly deportment and his generous and liberal conduct.”

The Colonel Loring thus mentioned was William Wing Loring, who had lost his right arm while leading his regiment into the City of Mexico two years before,

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and who was, soon after this letter was written, on the outbreak of the "gold fever" in California, ordered to cross the continent with his regiment and take command of the department of Oregon. He marched a distance of 2,500 miles with a train of six hundred mule teams, which was then considered the greatest military feat of the kind on record. He became Major General Loring in the Confederate Army, and acquired the name of "Old Blizzard" among the soldiers of the Confederacy. He subsequently entered the services of the Khedive of Egypt, and wrote, among other things, "A Confederate Soldier in Egypt."

On the 1st of March, 1849, Captain Edmund wrote to his mother:

"Speaking of society, our garrison boasts quite an extensive and agreeable collection of ladies and gentlemen, and they are not all doughboys either; for besides the Seventh and a battalion of the Third, the Rifle Regiment, two companies of Artillery and one of Dragoons have been for some time organizing and equipping here for a trip to the mountains in the spring. We are, besides, only ten miles from St. Louis and have the entrée to the houses and families of all the people of fashion and distinction. However, I but seldom visit the city. The

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gaieties of fashionable society have but few charms for me.”

In the summer of 1849, the cholera was raging in St. Louis. As many as four hundred deaths occurred daily in the city, while the epidemic raged even more fiercely in the country and neighboring villages. Hundreds and thousands fled in every direction. The roads from the city were lined with wagons and conveyances of every description. Rich and poor alike hurried along, anxious to escape the doom which seemingly overhung them. Captain Kirby Smith had desired, after the departure of his friend Colonel Loring from Jefferson Barracks, to be placed on duty at the Military Academy, West Point, in order that he might prepare himself, by a course of professional study for the event of his resigning from the army, should that ever be his wish. He was accordingly appointed instructor in mathematics at West Point. He deferred leaving for his new position until the mortality subsided in St. Louis and its vicinity; but he found the cholera making its appearance along the railroad, through Michigan, along the Lakes and in the upper part of the State of New York.

“There seemed,” so he wrote to his mother on the 7th of August, from Brownsville, New York, “some

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tatality attending my footsteps. It seemed that the doom of the Wandering Jew followed in my track. With a shudder through my veins, I found myself thinking of examining the prints of my footsteps for that mysterious sign of the cross."

On his journey east he found at Syracuse that the name of Kirby Smith was held in high esteem. It was the home of the family of his brother and he was detained there and treated with distinguished consideration by the citizens. He visited friends in the neighborhood of New York City, paid a visit to his old home in St. Augustine, and reported for duty at West Point on the 22nd of October. A week later he wrote to his mother:

"They have got me well into the traces—as they style it here—and most terribly tight traces they are. Up at daylight, study till 7, breakfast; attend recitation till 11:30, and then study till 1. Lunch and exercise, thirty minutes; then study till 7 p.m. Dine and indulge in a half-hour's luxury of looking at evening parade and hearing superior and skillfully executed music from the cadet band; and finally conclude the *amusements* of the day by studying till bed time—generally 11 p.m. You have here my daily routine of duty for at least a year to come. No variety, no change—unless I make up my mind to apply

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for orders; which, before the year is over, I shall probably do."

He had hoped, whether he remained in the army or entered the ministry, to improve and cultivate his mind by the study of those subjects which he felt had been neglected in the course of his education at West Point. He expressed disappointment in this, and found his opportunities for improvement much more limited than they would have been had he been with his regiment. He thus writes:

"The advantages of being near New York, where books and advice are always to be found, and of having a large and fine library at my disposal here, are all lost to me by my being compelled to apply myself so very closely to the immediate duties of my department. I do not find time even to read the morning paper after breakfast.

"Mr. Church, the Professor of Mathematics, assigned me to duty with the third class of cadets and placed two sections under my charge. This places me immediately at the instruction of the very highest branches of Mathematics; for the third class finishes the course of Mathematics in June. This requires, in addition to the study of the subject under instruction, a proficiency in all the various preparatory branches, including Algebra, Geometry, Trigo-

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nometry, Descriptive, Shades and Shadows, Analytical, etc. The truth is, I shall have to study very hard, day and night, for the next twelve months. After which I will have a more pleasant time."

A few weeks later he was able to write that Mathematics had ceased to trouble him and did not occupy so much of his time; that things were gliding along smoothly and quietly and that he could roam around the mountains; not in idleness, but admiring nature's beauties. He was ever an admirer of nature and a student of her ways, and he considered, as he expressed it, "a love and appreciation of her beauties as forming the true poetry of one's character."

It seemed at one time that his long cherished desire to apply for orders in the Church might be realized sooner than he had anticipated. He thus describes the situation:

"The superintendent has construed an article of the Academic Regulations to require the attendance of all officers and professors at Divine service in the Cadets' Chapel on Sunday. Several have protested against the illegality and unconstitutionality of the order. Others have refused to obey, having conscientious scruples. The Secretary of War has as yet acted upon the case of but one officer, who has been

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relieved from duty and ordered to join his regiment. It is supposed that like action will be taken upon the others. I have written my application, requesting that, in case a free exercise of my religious belief is considered incompatible with the interests of the Academy, I may be immediately relieved from duty; but I shall not forward it to Washington till after the action of the Secretary of War on the cases now under consideration."

This trouble subsided in due time, and on the 14th of February, 1850, Captain Kirby Smith wrote:

"Our sources of amusement are varied, as they must necessarily be where so large a number of bachelor officers are collected together. The mess alone numbers over twenty, of whom several lay claim to wit, talent, genius and scientific attainments. Our evening gatherings are *recherché*, entertaining and improving. We have a Chess Club, and a Shakespeare Club, each meeting weekly; besides an orchestral performance, where the music of the best masters is performed with taste and in a scientific style.

"They keep me hard at work, and will till the middle of June, when the examination takes place. We are now at the most difficult part of the Mathematical course, the Differential and Integral Calculus, and I

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find I have to devote seven or eight hours daily to the subject in order to do it justice.”

The Professor spent his holidays with his mother in St. Augustine. His health was not always good, and his desire to take holy orders was postponed. In September, 1852, he received orders to join his regiment, and Major Garnet, the Captain of his company having been appointed Commandant of Cadets and ordered to report for duty at West Point, it became imperative for him to join his company, where, by virtue of his brevet, his rank and position would be that of Captain.

“My military pride,” he wrote to his mother, “my reputation as a soldier, demand that I should not absent myself under such circumstances; and, indeed, my health requires a change of life and habits, and I am convinced that the active life, which, as commander of a mounted company, I must necessarily lead in Texas, will be the most beneficial change that could have taken place.

“My company is stationed at Ringgold Barracks, opposite Comargo, on the Rio Grande. It is mounted and has been doing dragoon duty for nearly two years past, and is said to be the best company of men in that department. Much as I regret leaving the Atlantic borders and being again separated from friends

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and relatives, I am delighted with the prospect of active service and of again doing military duty. What pleasure it will be to feel once more like a soldier; to know that I have a profession and am engaged in its legitimate duties. I have chosen the army, or rather the army has been selected for me as a profession, and I see no prospect of its ever being changed. I do not regret it; I am proud of it. But to be contented I must be devoted to it. I must honor my profession and not endeavor to shun or avoid its duties when unpleasant or disagreeable. Should I now remain absent, at a time when the command of my company is offered me, my self-respect would be lowered, my military character endangered, and my companions would, indeed, judge me better fitted for the pedagogue than the soldier. . . .

“I have been for some days engaged in preparing my baggage so as to have as few superfluities as possible. The principal items on my lists are books, a lamp, bedstead, keg of gun powder, six-shooter, knife and double-barrel shot gun. There is some advantage in being a bachelor. When I look at the ship-load of furniture, to say nothing of the wife and three children, the Colonel has to pack off with himself wherever he goes, and compare his with my own personel, which all goes into a good-sized trunk, I feel somewhat reconciled to an order which, in sending me to Texas, dooms me to old bachelordom.”

CHAPTER V

SOUTHWESTERN FRONTIER SERVICE

Never did mother have more devoted son than did the widow of Judge Smith, Mrs. Frances Kirby Smith, of St. Augustine, Florida, in her soldier son, Edmund Kirby Smith. In his letters to her, together with a rather fragmentary journal, we find the record of his career, for the nine years subsequent to his leaving West Point for the second time—years which were spent for the most part on the southwestern borders of the United States. These letters give vivid descriptions of the country and the conditions of life then existing in that region, and no better account of those years of the writer's life can be given than in extracts from these letters. On the 16th of March, 1853, he wrote from Ringgold Barracks, Texas, that he had been variously occupied, scouting after Indians, chasing Carbajal, a noted filibuster of those days, and then enters upon a description of Ringgold and the adjacent country:

“The Rio Grande runs here a little south of east, is a muddy, rapid stream with low banks, and is about one hundred and fifty yards wide. It is extremely

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crooked and fanciful in its course; more so than almost any other stream in the world; at one point, after following it around through its winding course some twenty or thirty miles, you find yourself within stone's throw of the point of departure. In its general features and peculiarities it is a miniature Mississippi. Skirting the banks of the river for a short distance above Fort Brown to Eagle Pass, a distance of nearly five hundred miles, is a strip of land, from twenty to thirty miles wide, a perfect desert with dry, parched, baked soil, marked in the Physical Atlas as a region of no rain, but where in fact some few rains do occur in the months of February and March. Throughout the greater portion of this region scarcely a blade of grass will grow except during the early months of spring; but the white lime soil seems extremely prolific in various kinds of thorny, spinose vegetation. The prickly pear (*opuntia*) towers up in arborescent form to the height of from ten to eighteen feet. The melon cactus, cereus and various other forms of cactaceæ, are scattered over the whole region, in some places forming impenetrable thickets; various forms of acacia and mimosa, among which our popinac (the Mexican *wisache*) is prominent with an occasional hackberry and mesquite intermingled with thorny shrubs peculiar to the Mexican frontier. One in particular deserves mention: the Mexican *hunco*, called by our botanists, wrongly, a

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koeberlinia, is a shrub, from four to ten feet in height, entirely destitute of leaves, those important organs in the vegetable economy, being replaced by thorns, and the whole plant is a complete network of long green spines.

“The whole extent of country between this river and the Nueces is almost entirely destitute of water, except where at some solitary rancho or *vacueria* (herd house) wells have been dug; and it is an ordinary thing to march thirty or forty miles without water. The population is in keeping with the country and its productions. The most honest and respectable man on the whole frontier, a judge, is a runaway forger from Mississippi. Everyone habitually carries his six-shooter and Bowie knife; and should he use them, it is generally with impunity. Courts are a farce. The magistrate and other officers are generally professed robbers and smugglers. The principal magistrate and the most influential person in the neighboring town of Rio Grande City, are both professional smugglers and robbers. The former is now acting under the commission of Carbajal and is organizing a force from among the ranger companies and idle desperadoes along the frontier for the avowed purpose of plundering and murdering on the opposite side of the river. Carbajal, the arch-robber and disorganizer, has been for some time a professed plunderer. With a force varying at times from

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twenty to three hundred men, he has been engaged in robbery and murdering. He has no political party — no Mexican friends. His followers are almost entirely Americans, foreigners and mulattoes. He has completely ingratiated himself with the people along the frontier, who are almost without exception sympathizers and adherents of his. He is a man of middle stature, fair complexioned for a Mexican, personally brave but unprincipled; speaks good English, and was educated in the United States. The Rangers, of which three companies have been in the service of the State of Texas, have just been disbanded, and have mostly enlisted with Carbajal. Though now professed robbers, previous to their discharge they were but little better — continually plundering and murdering. But three weeks since, a party consisting of a Corporal and eight men attacked a train of Mexican merchandise, killing the merchants and carrying off their mules and goods. There was nothing done to these men. 'It was good enough for a Mexican!' The only persons respected and feared on the frontier (yet cordially hated) are the officers and soldiers of the army.

"Our post is opposite Comargo, which is four miles back from the river on the San Juan. On the American side, the monotonous scenery is relieved by a ridge of hills from eighty to one hundred and fifty feet high, extending back a short distance from

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the river, which gives a varied and changing appearance to the otherwise unbroken line of the horizon. The hills are limestone, capped by a stratum of conglomerate, eight to twelve feet thick, which is horizontal and evidently at one time extended over the whole country, but has been washed away. It bears evident marks of the denuding power of that great ocean which geologists say, at the time of the coal formation (the carboniferous period) extended over this whole western country.

“One of these little hills rises up in the midst of our parade, and from its top gives a magnificent view of the neighboring country. Looking toward Mexico, the San Juan and Rio Grande are seen through their winding courses, while the Sierra Madre and Ceralvo Mountains on the right and left, with a broken and picturesque outline, are distinctly marked against the horizon, or else, blue and faint, fade away in the distance. This little hill is our Mount Pisgah, and from its summit, in the midst of dryness and desolation, with the thermometer at ninety-six degrees, the rain-clouds can be seen collecting on the tops of the distant mountains, fertilizing and refreshing with showers the valleys of Monterey and Ceralvo. Our quarters are good and commodious, but we can get nothing to eat but tough beef and commissary provisions. Vegetables will not grow. Watermelons and pumpkins alone flourish.”

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On the 1st of June he wrote:

“The greater portion of my time is passed upon the Llanos or prairies of Texas, and in scouting after the Indians and filibusters through the chaparrals of the Rio Grande. The country both above and below this Post has been thoroughly and repeatedly scouted over by me, and I have just returned from a ten days’ trip in the direction of the Nueces, making over sixty days in the saddle and more than one thousand miles marched over since the 25th of January. Being occupied during the intervals of my return, as far as the excessive heat will allow, in bringing up my papers and attending to the other duties of the company. I am frequently and suddenly ordered off before my letters are written, in pursuit of some imaginary party of Indians or freebooters or on the manufactured trail of depredators.

“It has been exceedingly hot during the past month, the thermometer ranging from ninety degrees to one hundred and five in the shade; the prevailing winds, which are from the south, pass for more than a hundred miles over a tract of barren, parched and desolate country, and sweep by us with all the scorching, withering influence of a simoon. Everything is dried and burnt up, and the few shrubs and trees which exist along this tract of desolation have been nearly as completely stripped of leaves as if a New

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England frost had performed the operation. We are here on the borders of a climate characterized either by excessive desolation or a most exuberant vegetation, and where under a vertical sun for months, all nature seems suspended. How wonderfully, by the most opposite means, are the same wise ends of Providence effected! Here excessive heat suspends all action and growth throughout the vegetable kingdom, and that season of rest and repose so necessary in the economy of the plant, is as thoroughly effected by the scorching sun as by the snows and wintry blasts of a northern clime.

“In escorting the filibuster chiefs down to Brownsville last April, I had a fine opportunity for visiting Fort Brown, which is pleasantly situated, has fine, comfortable quarters, a delightful and healthy climate and a good market. Every month brings a packet steamer from New Orleans, and it is but a few hours' ride to the Brazos, where there are fine Quartermaster's buildings, delightful bathing and plenty of fish and oysters. The sea breeze, regular in its daily and refreshing visitations at Brownsville, cools the air, while a rich and exuberant vegetation charms the eye. The luxuriousness of the latter may be judged by the fact that Fort Brown and its vicinity, which during the war were large ploughed fields, are now covered with a dense, and in some places almost impenetrable undergrowth. A forest of acacias

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(our Florida popinac) covers a large portion of the ground, and on the very ramparts of the old fort, trees are growing nearly thirty feet high and a foot in diameter. The hibiscus, some dozen species of verbenas and heliotropes, the lantana, our little purple trades-cantia and other of our garden and exotic flowers carpet the ground; the rich, scarlet clusters of the coral plant and the yellow, white and pink blossoms of different acacias and mimosas contrast finely among the characteristic yet graceful foliage of the Rio Grande chaparrals; while a thousand creepers, convolvuli, four-o'clocks, etc., festoon the boughs and hang in graceful clusters with rich and variegated blossoms from the highest tops, and cover the river bottom with a dense and almost impenetrable mass of foliage. This pictures the lower Rio Grande. Seventy miles above and the picture must be reversed. There, beyond the influence of the sea breeze, in a region of excessive heat, characterized by sand-thorns and cactii, flourish the robber, horse-thief, gambler and filibuster; the revolver and Bowie knife reign supreme — or did — for our decisive and energetic action at Rio Grande City has suddenly, and for the present at least, checked the growth of such baneful weeds.

“Filibusterism is now forgotten in the gathering tempests and threatening clouds rising along our southern horizon which have completely overshadow-

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owed their movements. Trouble seems preparing for us on the other side of the Rio Grande. All signs indicate an approaching struggle with Mexico. Santa Anna is concentrating at San Luis Potosí, and near this frontier, large bodies of troops; and, in addition to 26,000 regulars, is arming and organizing 90,000 citizen soldiery. The officers opposite, who used to visit us, and exchanged hospitality with us every day or two, have, since Santa Anna's arrival, ceased all intercourse, and speak openly and unreservedly of an approaching campaign as a thing decided upon. The Mexicans (Rancheros) on this side have been secretly notified that they can again become citizens of Mexico in a few weeks. Santa Anna is bold, energetic and unscrupulous. He knows that war between the two countries cannot long be avoided. The movements of filibusters along the frontier have already given sufficient cause. He must know also that his only hope of successfully resisting the Yankees consists in restoring the morale of his troops and raising the courage and confidence of the nation by some successful and brilliant operation. He can concentrate from twenty to forty thousand troops on this frontier almost before the people of the United States can know what he is about, and, overrunning the greater part of Texas, carry the war into the enemy's country."

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On the 19th of October, Captain Kirby Smith wrote from Fort Brown, Texas, that the fortunes of military life had at last brought his sister Frances (Mrs. Webster) and himself together:

"I arrived," he continued, "at this point a few days since in command of a battalion of my regiment and am now encamped on the parade with the prospect of remaining under canvas this winter. The troops have been distributed along this frontier in posts of from five to ten companies each — at this place, Ringgold Barracks, Laredo and Eagle Pass. The Colonel has been relieved of the command of this post by Major Porter, and we have now both Majors of the Fourth Artillery at the same post. The impression is that one of them will soon be ordered away, the Colonel to the United States, or Major Porter up the river.

"Major Delafield, of the Engineers, and General Smith have passed here on their way up the river. They have selected a site here for the erection of a four-bastioned field fort. We shall be delightfully employed this winter, living in tents and digging mud forts for the amusement of the Mexicans. We all think it a most ridiculous move on the part of the Secretary of War, having field works thrown up along this frontier. They tend to destroy the moral effect of our victories. If intended to preserve peace, they will have a contrary result, for the Mexicans are al-

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ready exulting in our fears. They are acquiring confidence, and say that we are afraid of them and may soon commit some act of folly which will plunge us into war. If intended as an offensive movement on our part, they are labor lost, as we should carry the war immediately into the enemy's country. Major Delafield seems to think the whole operation ridiculous, and says he will make as small works as he possibly can. At Ringgold a small square redoubt is to be thrown up, and corresponding works at the upper posts."

The war with Mexico then threatened was averted by the overthrow of Santa Anna's dictatorship by the Liberal Party in Mexico. On the 5th of November, the Captain communicated to his mother the death, on the previous day, of his brother-in-law, Colonel Webster, of yellow fever. "The Colonel," he wrote, "was first taken sick on Saturday, having been up night after night nursing and watching with the different members of his family." (Three members of the family and the servant were ill). "Thursday evening I went for the Episcopal minister, Mr. Passmore, and the Colonel participated with the members of the family in the blessed comforts of the Sacrament. He gave audibly all the responses, praying aloud at the conclusion of the service. A few moments later he became delirious and remained so

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through all the pains and agonies which always conclude a malignant case of yellow fever. A few minutes before his death, his pains ceased, he became quiet and died calmly, with a smile upon his countenance. He was very much beloved and respected by everyone, and every attention and respect was paid to him at his burial. All the Mexican officers and authorities came over from the Mexican side. We are all well now, no new cases of fever have occurred, and we hope and believe that the epidemic has entirely subsided."

On the 20th of January, 1854, however, he wrote:

"The yellow fever has entirely disappeared. A heavy frost and severe norther in the early part of this month destroyed the last remnants of the disease. Nearly every person in the garrison, man, woman and child, was attacked, and over one-fifth of the command died. I have but just recovered. For several days my life was despaired of, and for a month I was as helpless as a baby."

After his recovery, he secured a three months' leave of absence for the purpose of accompanying his widowed sister to New York; he afterwards paid a visit to his mother in St. Augustine. His letters to his mother were resumed while en-route

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to his command which had in the meantime, removed to San Antonio, Texas. On the 30th of June, he wrote from the Great Portland Canal, Louisville, Kentucky:

“Fast in the mud of this notorious canal and broiling under ninety-eight degrees of Fahrenheit in the shade, I find myself longing for a breath of cool sea breeze and thinking this, if not the bright, certainly the hot side of my Texas trip. I left New York eight days since by the Hudson River and New York Central Railroad, stopping three days at Syracuse. The train ran off the track, and one day was lost in Buffalo; detained two days in Cincinnati and one in Louisville, I have the prospective felicity of fishing for animalculæ and prosecuting extensive microscopic investigations in this delightful canal. We crawl along slowly, so slowly, indeed, that I believe that, like the Irishman’s pig, if I were to drive back in the other direction towards Cincinnati and take the railroad by the Lake Shore and Chicago to St. Louis, I would progress, if not so swimmingly, certainly more expeditiously.”

Writing from Fort Smith, Arkansas, on the 20th of July, he stated that in twenty days after his former letter he had succeeded in arriving at the beginning of his journey:

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"The Ohio is very low," he wrote. "Navigation had almost ceased. Yet after lengthened investigation of the bars between Louisville and the mouth, we were so fortunate as to reach that *ultima thule* of all western travellers, Cairo. There, with the thermometer ranging from ninety-six degrees to one hundred and eight degrees, and with mosquitoes and kindred pests contending for the spoils, we remained (at least some of our passengers did) four days awaiting a boat. Final arrangements were making for dropping seventy miles down stream to New Madrid in skiffs, when the 'St. Nicholas' came puffing down the river, our troubles ceased and a healthy state of pulse was soon produced by copious administrations of ice, mint, etc.

"I vainly thought it was now to be smooth sailing to Fort Smith, but my introduction to Arkansas was through four days' detention in Napoleon; and when we proceeded, the Arkansas river had fallen so rapidly that our boat could get no farther than Little Rock, and I was obliged to travel one hundred and fifty miles by land to Fort Smith, by a stage route over which passengers pay ten cents a pound for baggage in addition to their fare, and have the privilege of walking, when their shoulders are not required at the wheel. Fort Smith is situated on the line between the Indian reservation and Arkansas, and has delightful quarters from which the troops were removed two

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months ago, and sent some three hundred miles up into the Indian country.

"I am now about four hundred miles from my post with the prospect of not getting there within two months. It is one hundred and ninety miles to Fort Washita near the Red River, the road passing through the Choctaw and Chickasaw country, a quiet and peaceable country, with houses scattered some twenty miles apart along the road. From Washita to Preston on the Red River is twenty miles, and the trail then leads for one hundred and ninety miles through a wild and uninhabited country to Belknap. This latter part of the route, I shall not travel without an escort, though I do not apprehend any danger from the Indians. Our thermometer has been ranging from ninety-six degrees to one hundred and three degrees in the shade for two weeks past and our only comfort consists in drinking claret punches and adopting the Georgia uniform."

From camp, near San Antonio, Texas, he wrote on the 2nd of October:

"I have been assigned by orders from Washington to the command of the escort to the Boundary Commission, and am on the eve of marching to El Paso where the labors of the Commission begin. Since I wrote to you from Arkansas, I have been contin-

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ually in the saddle, and have ridden some nine hundred miles through Arkansas, the Cherokee and Chickasaw country and through the northern part of Texas, to Fort Belknap, one hundred and fifty miles beyond the line of settlements, and then three hundred and sixty miles to San Antonio, where I arrived on the 1st of October. My trip from Fort Smith through the Indian country to the Red River was made in the latter part of July and early August with the thermometer ranging from ninety-six to one hundred and four degrees in the shade. What it was in the sun and on those dry, scorched prairies, which seem so interminably to succeed each other west of the Arkansas, I dare not even guess. I have only the dried and shrivelled parchment-like condition of my hands and face to measure by. At Fort Washita I was detained for some time awaiting an escort, and finally travelled the greater part of the way from Red River to Fort Belknap alone. Crossing the Red River at Preston, the distance to Fort Belknap is about two hundred miles, one hundred miles being beyond the cross timbers and without the extreme line of the settlements.

“Belknap, which I supposed was to be my destination, is a long scattered range of log huts, over half a mile in extent in a post-oak grove on the banks of the Brazos. It is pleasantly situated and despite its straggling and indefensible condition, is a desirable

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station. The Brazos is a beautiful though brackish stream. The country around is rich in picturesque scenery, perfectly healthy and abounds in every description of game. I found some of my classmates at the post and a fine pack of hounds. The morning after my arrival, with Lieutenants Givens and Cumming, I started out at daylight for a chase. Our dogs struck a fresh trail and in the river bottom treed some large animal. My companions were at a loss to determine the genus of the 'varmint,' but I immediately recognized in it an immense puma, or Mexican lion which had strayed up to the Upper Brazos. We were without arms excepting a small revolver of mine which contained three loads. These were soon discharged and, though severely wounded, the villain was apparently not much hurt. Bounding from tree to tree and levelling a dog with every stroke of his paw, he at first seemed inclined to demolish us likewise. Fortunately the noise, our threatening aspect, and a good shower of stones, frightened him off. We soon drove him to cover again, and while Givens returned for a gun, Cumming, myself, and the remaining dogs, with a respectable pile of rocks, kept him in check. After a two hours' fight and without injury to ourselves, we finally captured the gentleman. He measured nearly eight feet from the head to the tip of the tail. Van Amburg says the puma is the fiercest and most untamable animal he has ever dealt with.

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Bear, deer, cats, foxes, hares, grouse, partridge etc., are abundant around the Post. The Comanches, Kioways, Wacos, etc., are all around the Post, but those in its neighborhood have ever been friendly.

“Three days after my arrival, a dispatch from Washington came ordering me with my company to San Antonio. Having no alternative but to obey, however much I might regret leaving such a pleasant neighborhood, I immediately took up the line of march, passing for three hundred and sixty miles through the most beautiful part of Texas. Following the course of the Brazos for one hundred and forty miles in a southeasterly direction, we struck the settlements in the neighborhood of Fort Graham. Then by a southerly course, crossing the Guadalupe, Salado, and several other streams, and passing through Austin, we arrived at San Antonio on the 1st of October.

“For the benefit of some of my Florida friends, who may be tired of sand and pine barrens, and who may still have energy left to leave the State, I will give a brief description of this country. From the Red River to San Antonio is the most beautiful tract of land I have ever seen; a limestone country covered with a deep layer of rich black vegetable mold in most places apparently inexhaustible; well-watered with clear, rapid streams crossing in every direction; extremely healthy, with a delightful climate. Throughout the whole extent a rolling prairie; well

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wooded, with oak, elm, pecan, walnut; and along the creeks and streams and in the bottoms, it is probably the best stock country on the continent. A rich luxuriant growth of mesquite grass covers the prairies on which cattle can graze summer and winter. Forty bushels of corn to the acre have been no unusual crop in this neighborhood and as much as sixty to the acre have been raised this season — an unusually prosperous one, it is true. Along the road in the neighborhood of San Marcos below Austin, I saw corn and cotton in the fields that would yield at least thirty bushels and one bale to the acre. Land about San Antonio, the most desirable part of Texas for a residence, sells for from three to five dollars an acre, and ranges from one to seven, growing less and less as you leave the settlements.

“I leave in a few days for El Paso with the Commission; thence west to Santa Cruz on one of the tributaries of the Gila, where lies the theatre of Major Emory’s (the Commissioner’s) operations. We will be absent at least a year, when I expect to return to Washington. Major Emory has offered me the Department of Botany, which will require my return to Washington for the purpose of making a report. I ought to feel gratified at having, without my seeking, received the appointment to the command of the escort, as it is an appointment, which, although its duties are arduous and fatiguing in the extreme, has

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been much desired and has been applied for by officers my seniors in rank, age and service.

“My health is excellent, and with the exception of a severe case of poison which afflicted me for some weeks on the road, has never been better. Every day in the field strengthens and improves me and I seem proof against all the fevers, chills, etc., which are the usual accompaniment of a camp life.”

CHAPTER VI

SOUTHWESTERN FRONTIER SERVICE: WITH THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION

THE Commission to which Captain Kirby Smith was now assigned as escort and botanist, was for the determination of the boundary between the United States and Mexico, especially under the Gadsden Treaty of 1853. Just three weeks after writing the letter last quoted in the previous chapter, he set out upon the performance of the new duties assigned to him; and his first letter to his mother thereafter was written at Camp on Las Moras, near Fort Clark, Texas, while on the march to El Paso, on the 31st of October, 1854:

“I am now camped on a clear, limpid stream of crystal water which heads but a few yards above in a magnificent spring. A grove of venerable oaks over-shadows my tent, furnishing a canopy of green and luxuriant foliage, while the waters rippling and murmuring over their pebbly bed, reflect in varied light, the rapid and graceful movements of the bass and trout sporting in their silvery home. You would laugh at my vagaries were I to tell you that this is the last jumping-off place of civilization. Yet in-

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deed, so it is considered; and Fort Clark on Las Moras, looking west toward the bleak plains and trackless wastes of the Rio Grande is the last point on the great highway to El Paso where the face of a white man greets the emigrant on his tedious route. Two companies of the First Infantry and one of the Rifles are here entrusted with the pleasant duty of keeping the Indians in check; though as in the case of most of our frontier posts, they appear to have been stuck down in a defenseless position for the purpose of being kept in check by the Indians. The Lipans and Tonkaways have for some time been encamped in and around the post, and their grim visages and forbidding countenances, as they stalk about our camp, keep us bright, vigilant, and on the lookout.

“The government in its wisdom has seen fit to order the location of the Lipans on the Upper Brazos with their inveterate enemies the Comanches. The Lipans have remonstrated in vain against being sacrificed to their powerful foe; and though for years friendly and our allies in expeditions against the prairie tribes, yesterday they stampeded and made for the Mexican frontier with all the stock they could drive off from the neighborhood of the post.

“We left San Antonio on the 23rd of October, with a train of forty wagons and an attendant suite of teamsters, attachés, frontiersmen and savant, travel-

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ling west through a beautiful region of country for ninety miles to Fort Inge on the Leona. Here a notable change takes place in the character of the country. Rich luxurious vegetation, charming valleys and placid streams, are succeeded by a rocky, barren soil and rapid torrents. The characteristic growths of the Rio Grande develop themselves along the hill-sides; and mountain ranges now make their first appearance. In the neighborhood of Fort Clark, thorny bushes, acacias, cactii, the plumed partridges, chaparral cock, horned frog and other peculiarities in the flora and fauna of New Mexico, become abundant. Game is plenty. Nature seems to delight throughout these vast wilds, in congregating her feathered tribes in immense conserves in proportion to the grand scale on which she has laid out the vast wilderness. Turkeys roost by tens of thousands along the streams. Acres upon acres of grass cover the prairies while different species of quail in countless coveys, feed along the roadside. We are now about four hundred and sixty miles from El Paso, but have a wild, desolate region of mountain ranges and trackless wastes to pass over, which six years ago had never been trodden by the foot of the white man. I believe our friends, Baldy Smith and Henry Whiting, were the first to pass through this region when they made their adventurous trip in '49. We shall probably leave day after to-morrow. We are waiting two

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days to recruit our animals. We expect to arrive in El Paso before the end of November."

The Baldy Smith and Henry Whiting, mentioned in the foregoing letter, were his classmates at West Point and were on the Boundary Commission of 1849. Captain Kirby Smith has occasion to write more of them and of their adventures in his next letter written from the Camp below El Paso, on the 15th of December:

"We remained three days at Fort Clark recruiting the animals and completing our outfit before launching upon that dreary wilderness which extends to El Paso. During this time it rained very hard and we found the road, which has been termed a natural turnpike, almost impassable. The soil was saturated; at times, on apparently a hard gravelly soil, the mules would sink to their flanks and have to be unharnessed and hauled out with ropes, and the wagons dragged through by hand. In many places detours of several miles had to be made over the mountain ridges. We were five days going about twenty-five miles; and between making roads, playing wagon-master, teamster, etc., you may conceive how considerably I have been enlarging my experiences.

"Thus far the country has been characterized by clumps of dwarf, thorny chaparral, an entire absence

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of timber and the same desolation so peculiar to all the neighborhood of the Rio Grande. The streams are bold, clear, and rapid, abounding in fish, and subject to rises which come from the mountains, whose isolated peaks from three hundred to eight hundred feet high, assimilate this region to all the western part of Texas. Descending some four or five miles by a deep cañon to the San Pedro (or Devil's River, as it is appropriately called), we entered upon a region wild, grand and desolate beyond anything I have ever experienced, and a type, I understand, of a large portion of New Mexico and a good deal of the country through which the boundary line is to be run.

“Conceive of a vast plain covered with water—or rather, a vast ocean—to have been dried up by one of those freaks of elevation or subsidence with which Dame Nature seems so freely to have indulged, and its surface to have been cut into innumerable deep chasms by the retiring currents of water, and you can form some conception of the appearance of this country. These chasms through a level country are termed cañons and are characteristic of the country, from Fort Clark to the Rocky Mountains. From Devil's River to the Limpia Mountains (Sierra Diablos) is one vast network of cañons, more or less intricately interwoven and varying from three hundred to twelve hundred feet in depth. The road winds through the cañon of Devil's River, crossing the bed

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of the stream seventeen times in the course of twenty miles. In some places not much more than one hundred feet in width, cut through the strata of rock from six hundred to eight hundred feet deep, with the Devil's stream roaring and tumbling over the rocks in its narrow channel and rushing through the dark caverns in the limestone cliffs, you can almost imagine you are entering the portals of Pandemonium itself.

"The Pecos, or *Puercos* (Hoggish), as it is sometimes called, is about one hundred and fifty miles from Devil's River, and a little more than half way to the Limpia Mountains. As it has been styled by one of our party, it is 'a most *sui generis* kind of a stream.' Rising in the Rocky Mountains, running more than a thousand miles before it empties into the Rio Grande; it is deep, rapid, extremely crooked and seldom more than thirty yards in width; with dark, turbid, bitter waters. Its banks are inaccessible, except in a few places, in its course through Texas. Not a stick of timber, not a bush marks its course; not a sign of life; not a moving thing approaches its solitary, dreary neighborhood, and you may stand within twenty yards of its bank and not know that a stream passes through the desolate plain before you. The Pecos has always been the great bugbear of this route, though not more than eighty feet wide at the crossing. We passed our whole train without any serious accident.

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“Between the Pecos and Limpia, at Comanche Spring where we camped, the emigrant route through Fredericksburg, the great Comanche War Trail into Mexico and the Merchants’ route through Presidio to Chihuahua, all unite. The Limpia Mountains are a volcanic formation with bold, rugged and inaccessible peaks from one thousand to four thousand feet high. Running north from the Rio Grande, they would form an impassable barrier to all further progress but for a single pass which winds through them. Following the valley of the Limpia, a small stream rising in the mountains, the road turns into the Sierra at the Wild Rose Pass, where with scarcely more than room for the wagons to pass, the basaltic columns are piled up vertically, behind each other on both sides of the road for more than a thousand feet. Beyond, on each side, huge masses of rock are piled upon each other for an additional thousand feet. I rode through this pass for four or five miles in a continual state of excitement and with my heart full of the grandeur and sublimity of the scene. I could not but think, however, of my friend Baldy Smith who passed through here at night, with visions of wild Apaches at his heels. Indeed, the discovery of this pass and road is due solely to the daring and perseverance of my friends ‘Baldy,’ Howard, and Henry Whiting, who in 1849, with six or eight men, were the first white men who had ever ventured into

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this region and who succeeded in forcing their way through the Apaches and the wilderness to El Paso.

“Encamped at the foot of the Limpia Mountains through which they had vainly attempted to find a practicable pass, they were surrounded by two bands of Apaches (Mescaleros and Picarillos). The chief of the latter band, Gomez, a renegade Mexican priest, celebrated throughout Mexico, said they must die. No white man could be allowed to enter those mountains which were the peculiar land of the Apaches. Leaving large fires in their camp, they were led through the Wild Rose Pass at midnight by some of the Mescaleros, who reported the result of the council and sped them safely on through the mountains.

“Six miles beyond the pass in a little cañon near the head of the Limpia (stream) we found six companies of the Eighth Infantry, nearly three hundred miles from the settlements and surrounded by mountains and Indians. They have a delightful prospect before them. Several of their families are with them, however, and though it is but a few weeks since their arrival, they have already made themselves quite comfortable.⁴

“From this point to the Rio Grande, nearly one hundred and forty miles, there is no permanent water for the supply of large trains; and the dried and

⁴ This is now Fort Davis.

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shrivelled carcasses of animals strewed along the *hornado* bear lamentable witness to the sufferings of those who have ventured across, at an unfavorable season. We travelled, on several occasions, day and night, for thirty-six hours, without water. And the grinning countenances of these carcasses, preserved with all the agonies and contortions of death in that dry and elevated region (five thousand feet), were no pleasant companions to a day's journey without water.

"Descending nearly twelve hundred feet for six or seven miles, through a wild cañon, we entered the bottoms of the Rio Grande some two thousand miles above its mouth. Following the river for seventy miles, the first settlement on the American side is San Elizario, our present camp. There are two other towns between our camp and El Paso (twenty-three miles), Isleta and Socorro, with a population in all of about two thousand miserable, dirty specimens of the Mexicans. The houses are built of adobe (sun dried brick); of one story, dirt floor; generally with two rooms, a sleeping apartment and a long room or sala, without furniture, where the Mexicans squat on the floor to receive company.

"I was invited to a *baile* or fandango in San Elizario shortly after my arrival. I found a long room (sala) devoid of furniture, except at one end where an image of the Virgin, a crucifix and several of the tutelary

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saints of the country decked the walls. Under the canopy these formed, the ladies were seated *a la Turque*, in rows six or eight deep, an immense phalanx of petticoats and starch. The opposite end of the room was graced by a table of the El Paso wine and cake, where every gentleman was expected to treat his partner at the rate of six cents a glass. The music struck up, when a general rush was made toward the shrine of Our Lady by the blanketed gentry who lined the sides of the sala; as many bundles of starch and petticoats found their way to the middle of the floor. The dance was *sui generis*. The finale I will not attempt to describe. My devotions to the shrine were soon paid and I wended my way towards the camp.

"We arrived here on the fifth. Major Emory, the Commissioner, proceeded immediately to El Paso and left me in command with the general superintendence of the Commission. The surveying party is already in the field and with the astronomical party, which has established its observatory five miles above El Paso, will have determined the initial point by the 15th of next month. We then move on the line through a region which for seventy or eighty miles is said to be without a drop of water.

"My duties with Colonel Emory are very pleasant. He treats me with great consideration, consults me upon almost every occasion and leaves me quite independent in my command. My company was strength-

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ened by a detachment from the First Infantry at Fort Clark, and since our arrival here, a company of Dragoons has been added to the escort. My duties give me constant occupation, for, in addition to being Commanding Officer, Quartermaster, Commissary, etc., Colonel Emory has appointed me Botanist of the expedition. I have been for thirteen days with a clerk making out the papers for the quarter, so that I have but little time, even if I had the inclination, for indulging in the gaities of El Paso society. Its wine and its women are alike celebrated."

Captain Kirby Smith kept a diary of this remarkable trip which fills out, to some extent, some of the incidents and observations omitted from his letters. Thus at Commanche Spring, on the 16th and 17th of November, he wrote in his journal as follows:

"Here the great war trail of the northern Comanches and Kioways passes southerly into Mexico. Coming from their homes on the Red and the Canadian, by the head waters of the Colorado, across the Llano Estacado and the Horse Head crossing of the Pecos to the Big Bend of the Rio Grande, their broad trail is known as the *Camino Ancho* of the Comanche. Their returning warriors after a successful foray, are sometimes weeks passing this point with their many thousand head of captured animals. They carry their

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incursions way down into Durango and have made all the northern departments of Mexico their tributaries. The whole northern frontier of that unfortunate country is almost depopulated; and where formerly countless herds roamed peaceably and securely over the prairie; where flourishing haciendas and rich churches provided for their throngs, ruin and desolation have succeeded opulence and festivities. The thieving Apache and the prowling coyote remain joint masters; the hoarse croak of the raven, and the howl of the wild beast have usurped the lowing of herds and the merry chime of the church bell. The remains of ancient Aztec greatness and the massive ruins of the Jesuit stand side by side, monumental marks of the two great cycles of change in that now desolated region. A rich deposit of shells and fossils belonging to the cretaceous period is exposed on the slope of the hill north of the spring.

“Beyond the Wild Rose Pass exists a vast dog town, some thirty miles in extent, stretching around the Post (Fort Davis), and desolating the whole neighboring country. The prairie-dog usually establishes his home in the elevated plains where the grama grass abounds, on the roots of which he lives. He desolates the whole country and moves his residence as soon as the work of devastation is completed. The owl and the rattlesnake are his constant attendants, not in the bonds of amity and good fellowship,

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as travellers generally suppose, but as unwelcome visitors and invaders of his hearth and home. Providence arrests his devastation by making his home unprotected from and suitable to his ancestral foes, the owl and the rattlesnake."

After establishing their depot at San Elizario and leaving the escort in camp under charge of Lieutenant Cumming, Major Emory, the scientific corps, and Captain Kirby Smith, moved up to El Paso. The entries made in the diary of the Captain are interesting:

"Between San Elizario and El Paso, some thirty miles, the valley of the Rio Grande widens out into a broad alluvial plain of inexhaustible richness and easily irrigated. Under the Spanish rule, when the laws regulating the irrigation of land were wisely made and vigorously enforced, this valley was under cultivation and the waters of the Rio Grande, taken out some six miles above El Paso, shed their fertilizing influence over the lands for ten miles below San Elizario. Scattering vineyards and solitary cornfields still attest the richness of the soil. But the valley of the Rio Grande will never reach its former state of agricultural prosperity until the old system of irrigation is fully restored.

"The grape is here cultivated as in France and in

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the vineyards along the Rhine. In yield of fruit and in richness and delicacy of flavor, the El Paso grape compares favorably with the best varieties of the eastern continent. New Mexico, Lower California and Western Texas are all admirably adapted to the culture of the grape. The climate is dry and equable, and the soil, over large tracts of country, of volcanic origin. The wild varieties are numerous and often fine flavored. One resembles that from which the Chateau Margaux is made; another is no bad imitation of the far-famed Malaga, and under cultivation, all would improve in yield and flavor. Before thirty years we may see our cellars stocked with wines from these localities, which in variety and delicacy of flavor, will compare favorably with those of the most famous grape districts of Europe."

During the months of December, 1854, and January, 1855, the initial point of the survey was established; the El Paso Mountains were surveyed and an effort was made to run the parallel across the desert table-land stretching west from the Rio Grande. The shifting sand hills, which had heretofore rendered that region impassable to man and beast, proved an insurmountable obstacle to the progress of the work in that direction. Early in February, 1855, Major Emory determined to turn to the south of the Sand Hills Desert by the Department of Chihuahua; to establish a depot

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some hundred miles west in the vicinity of the parallel; to observe for latitude and longitude and thus connect the line across the desert with the initial point already determined near El Paso. The Commission accordingly left El Paso on the 6th of February, 1855, by the old Chihuahua road, and after a journey of thirty-two miles through a desolate country, reached a water-hole called Samalayuca. There preparations were made for crossing the Sand Hills which were at that point narrowed down to a strip of shifting ridges only four miles in width. Hitching twenty-four mules to a wagon, the strip was crossed without accident during the nights of the 8th and 9th of February, the animals going a day and a night without water. Travelling thence thirty-two miles, the party reached the Salado, a salty, bitter and uncertain water-hole, surrounded by incrustations of salt and soda and perfectly bare of vegetation. Thirty miles further brought the Commission to the Santa Maria River, a bold clear stream with some timber on its banks, running north and emptying into Santa Maria Lake. It was a great resort for bands of the Gila Apaches. Another thirty miles brought the travellers to the San Pedro mines—the entrance to which, near the summit of the mountain, was difficult of access. The silver ore from these mines was extremely rich, and after smelting was carried to the Chihuahua mint for coinage. Fifteen miles

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further on, the expedition reached Coralitos, a town of fifteen hundred inhabitants on the Coralitos River; and twenty-one miles farther brought the travellers to Janos.

Janos was then a town of about six hundred population on the Janos River, a branch of the Coralitos. It had once contained six thousand inhabitants, but like most of the towns of Sonora and Chihuahua, had suffered from Indian incursions and at the time of the visit of the Boundary Commission, exhibited but a vestige of its former prosperity. Its houses were in ruins and its people poverty-stricken. The Commission left by the Coppermine road running north to Fort Webster in New Mexico, but found that the road had not been travelled for many years and had been so washed in the neighborhood of Janos, that it was necessary to make a circuit of twenty-two miles around the Janos Mountain (a mound fifteen miles from the town), at Lagunita, a salt pond with springs of fresh water on its southern side. Nearly fifty miles further on, a camp was selected for a depot, of which Lieutenant Cumming was left in command; and Captain Kirby Smith set out with the train for Fort Fillmore and Mesilla, in New Mexico, for supplies. On the first day's march the place was reached where Major Emory subsequently established his observatory and determined the position of the parallel. The trip to Fort Fillmore was accomplished

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successfully, though not without hardship and difficulty, and the business being transacted at the Fort, the party set out on its return. Captain Kirby Smith made valuable botanical observations and notes on his way back and arrived in Janos on the 8th of April. Leaving Janos five days later, the Commission spent several days at Ojo San Luis, taking observations, and then proceeded by way of the cañon of Guadalupe to the Valley of San Bernadino, where it remained until the 3rd of May, observing for latitude. Thence it proceeded to Santa Cruz and remained there for several days to determine the parallel; and thence went to Los Nogales where the final depot and observatory were established and where the Commission remained in camp many weeks until the completion of the work.

During the stay at Nogales, Captain Kirby Smith made repeated excursions into Sonora and to the neighboring mountains, hunting grizzly bear and bighorn, meeting with many adventures and having some narrow escapes from both red skins and grizzly. "One enormous grizzly," he wrote in his diary, "which must have weighed from nine hundred to one thousand pounds, attacked me when alone and on foot in the mountains. I reserved my fire, and when he reared up within three feet of me and his huge tusks and formidable claws confronted me, I thought my last day had come. Kind Providence

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aided me, and I killed the fellow without receiving a scratch."

On the 1st of August, 1855, Major Emory received an order relieving Captain Kirby Smith of the command of the escort of the Boundary Commission and directing him to report to the Colonel of his regiment. Major Emory thereupon wrote to the Secretary of the Interior as follows:

"In the discharge of his duty on this Commission, Captain Smith has displayed the most untiring energy and perseverance. He has been of the greatest aid in the successful prosecution of this difficult work; and I can do no less than call his admirable conduct to your notice and request you to bring it to the notice of the Honorable Secretary of War. I regret exceedingly that the exigencies of the service did not permit him to remain to the close of the work now so nearly successfully completed."

Captain Kirby Smith accordingly returned to the East and made a complete report upon his botanical observations, which was published in the Smithsonian Institution Reports.

CHAPTER VII

SOUTHWESTERN FRONTIER SERVICE; SCOUT- ING WITH THE SECOND CAVALRY UNDER LEE

THE Secretary of War, to whose notice the letter of Major Emory, quoted in the previous chapter, was brought, was Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, who was then organizing a new regiment of cavalry, in the constituency of which unusual care was taken in the selection of officers. The choice was dictated not merely by ability but also by locality. Of the fifty-one officers who served in this regiment prior to the Civil War, thirty-one were from the South, and twenty-four entered the Confederate service. Twelve became General Officers.

There is no lack of suspicion at the present day that this constituency of the Second Cavalry Regiment was in anticipation of and in preparation for the great struggle which was then beginning to loom up in the distance. Captain Edmund Kirby Smith was promoted to a captaincy in this regiment and wrote the details thereof to his mother from Jefferson Barracks, on the 20th of October, 1855:

“My promotion has been so great and unexpected, and so high a compliment has been paid me in pro-

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moting me, unsolicited, from the Infantry to a high rank in the Cavalry, that I feel that all my energies should now be given to the organization of my regiment and to assisting to infuse a proper tone and military spirit into a corps, which frontier service and New Mexican habits have completely demoralized. Colonel Johnston is a man of great talents and ability and of good common sense. He has great influence with the administration and is determined to make the Second Cavalry *the* Regiment of the Army. He was a classmate of Kirby's, and is inclined to be a good friend to me. Colonel Lee, the most accomplished officer and gentleman in the army, was the Superintendent of the Military Academy during my stay in the Mathematical Department. Colonel Hardee, the model drill and duty officer of the mounted service, is your good friend. Major Thomas, an old and esteemed friend, was Colonel Webster's Lieutenant at the battle of Buena Vista. With such field officers and company officers, of which your harum-scarum boy is the least deserving, you may imagine what we expect to do with our regiment after a year's discipline. Our horses average \$150 in value. Our men are principally Americans. My company was enlisted in the mountains of Virginia by my First Lieutenant, Walter Jenifer, an old classmate of Benjamin Hallowell's and West Point memory. Bud Wood, grandson of General Taylor, was attached as

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Second Lieutenant to the Company by his father's particular request.

"We march for Texas on Thursday next and will probably camp this winter on the Llano, where Colonel Johnston proposes moving to the Wichita Mountains on Red River. There, in one large camp, we can keep up our instruction and scout through the ranges of the Comanches and Kioways along the frontiers of Texas. We are all working hard, breaking in ourselves, men and horses. From daylight to sundown we have barely time to eat a hasty meal."

It was indeed a remarkable body of officers in the Second (afterwards the Fifth) Cavalry. President Pierce had appointed to the Colonelcy of the regiment, Albert Sidney Johnston, whom General Taylor had called the "best soldier he had ever commanded," and whose appointment to this Colonelcy, General Scott declared was "a godsend to the army and the country." Robert E. Lee was Lieutenant Colonel, and the Major Thomas whom Captain Edmund Kirby Smith mentioned in his letter to his mother just quoted, was afterwards Major General George H. Thomas, the greatest officer in the Federal army. The other Major was William J. Hardee, afterwards Major General Hardee of the Confederate army. The regiment furnished also from its official staff

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Generals Earl Van Dorn, John B. Hood, Fitzhugh Lee, Innis Palmer, Emory, Oaks, Stoneman, Field, Garrard, Cosby, Lomax, Major, Byrnes, "Shanks" Evans, and R. W. Johnson. Theodore O'Hara, the gifted author of the "Bivouac of the Dead," was at one time a member of the regiment.

The very best horses were obtained, purchased chiefly in Kentucky, for this regiment at an average cost of \$150 apiece, which was then the equivalent of double that amount now, and these were the best mounts the regiment ever had. Several patterns of carbines were in use, with Colt's revolvers and sabres. The uniform adopted at first was the close fitting jacket, trimmed with yellow braid; silk sash; black hat looped up at the side with an eagle, and ostrich feather plumes. Brass scales, intended to turn the sabre strokes of the enemy, were provided for the shoulders, but were worn only for full dress. Boots or gauntlets were not worn.

As to the discipline of the officers and men in the Second Cavalry on the Southwestern frontier, a very good description may be read between the lines, if not in the lines themselves, of letters written by the Captain to his mother, which not only relate the career of the writer for the next few years, but also show how the soldiers of that regiment were trained for the great struggle between the North and the South in the years 1861 to 1865. The first of these

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letters was written at Fort Gibson, Indian Reserve, on the 30th of November, 1855:

"We arrived here day before yesterday after a most disagreeable march through the state of Missouri. The Department has been experimenting upon us as new and picked troops, and has ordered us off on a march of more than one thousand miles without transportation. We are to subsist upon the country passed over; the men to carry their kit, blankets, etc., upon their horses. A succession of cold rains and snows has been very severe upon the command. Indeed in the whole course of my military experience I have never seen men suffer more than our troops have in this march from Jefferson Barracks. We are still about six hundred miles from our probable destination on the Llano where we expect to arrive some time in February. Hardee, our gallant Major, is in excellent spirits and gains in flesh every day of the march."

From Fort Chadbourne, Texas, he wrote on the 17th of June, 1856:

"I arrived here yesterday with two companies of my regiment and joined a force from Camp Cooper under command of Colonel Robert E. Lee, for the purpose of operating against the Comanches. We leave tomorrow with one month's supplies and will

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scour the country along the headwaters of the Concho, Colorado and Brazos Rivers.

“The Comanches, a band of some two hundred warriors, under Sanico, have lately given considerable trouble and committed several murders on the frontier. A collision took place a few days ago at the post in which nine Indians were killed. Captain Eastman, the commanding officer, had his quarters riddled with bullets. Several were killed in his front and back rooms in which a regular melee took place between some of the officers and the sub-chiefs. The Indians have since taken the alarm and are probably ere this on their way towards the Red and Canadian Rivers. A long and tedious march through a barren country at an extremely disagreeable season of the year will probably be the only result of our expedition. My health is good and I despair of getting out of the country on sick leave. But, unless something unexpected happens, I shall get a leave next January. Colonel Hardee has just received orders for West Point and you will probably see him on the way to his station.”

From Fort Mason, Texas, on the 31st of July, 1856, he wrote the results of the expedition against the Comanches:

“I have just returned after a six weeks' absence on the headwaters of the Brazos and Colorado Rivers.

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The expedition started in the early part of June under the command of Colonel Robert E. Lee in the hopes of capturing the renowned Sanico and his party of Comanches. As has been the case with all large expeditions against the nomadic tribes on our western prairies, we travelled through the country, broke down our men, killed our horses, and returned as ignorant of the whereabouts of Mr. Sanico as when we started. Our expedition, however, has not been fruitless. We have explored some new country and increased our knowledge of the character and geography of the land, and established such facts regarding the nature of the country as will, I trust, prevent the sending of many more expeditions in that direction.

“We found the country a dry and barren desert; the grass was all parched up and the ground covered with an efflorescence of soda and salt. The water was generally salt, bitter and unpalatable—a compound of Epsom and Glauber salts and salts of magnesia and lime. Immense beds of gypsum crop out along the arroyas, and the banks of the streams are white with the crumbling and disintegrated sulphate of lime. We were providentially favored throughout our whole trip and thus saved much pain and suffering. We had one or two heavy rains in a proverbially dry country during the dry season, and we found temporary puddles of rain water on the mountain tops where we otherwise would have lost our animals. I

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returned in good health and with my squadron am stationed at Fort Mason under command of Major George H. Thomas, late of the Artillery."

From the same post he wrote on the 1st of September, 1856, having just returned from a trip to the southern border of the Llano Estacado and the heads of the Llano and Guadalupe Rivers:

"After having been out on the plains and wilds of Texas for more than two weeks, without change of clothes, without having seen a soul and without having undressed except for a hasty bath in some water hole, to return to the comforts of even a temporary home is a luxury indeed.

"The change is great from the quiet, comfortable life of the infantry soldier to the wild roving life of privation of the dragoon. Then you had your little library, could read, could accumulate comforts and luxuries around you and live like a civilized being and a Christian man. Now, the heavens are your canopy, or a fluttering canvas stretched under some tree is your home, the green sward your couch. Your luxuries are a bear hunt and a mile-and-repeat horse race; and if you love books and eschew whiskey, your education will have been sadly neglected. But do not be alarmed. I shall never become a bear, though I may love the bear hunt. I shall

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never drink whiskey though I be a dragoon. I may live in a tent but I shall never give up my books nor the refining influences of an intelligent mind.

“Our duties here are extremely arduous. We are constantly scouting, move rapidly without equipage, sleep in the open air with our horse-blanket for a bed and saddle for a pillow. Pork, flour and coffee, with game, are our only subsistence. In our habits we are almost as nomadic as the Bedouin of the plains, feeding our horses on the scattered grass of the prairies and depending principally upon our own executions for our subsistence.

“There are now scarcely any Indians left in Texas excepting those on the reservation near Camp Cooper. Occasional straggling bands of Comanches from the upper Red and Canadian Rivers depredate upon the frontier of Texas. They come on foot in parties of three or four, skulk around the settlements and in the first unguarded moment, stampede the stock and then travel day and night until they think themselves safe from pursuit. It is only by adopting their mode of life, and whilst on scout, assimilating ourselves to their habits, that we can operate successfully against them.

“Major Thomas leaves here to-morrow or next day for Ringgold Barracks. He will be absent two or three months on the trial of Giles Porter, and leaves me in command of the post. My duties will probably confine me to the garrison during his absence.

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“I wish you could see me in scouting costume. Mounted on my mule—(the dearest, gentlest and most intelligent brute,—small but round, fat as a dumpling, with sleek coat, bright eyes and two well developed and expressive ears, actively moving in every direction and speaking as plainly as an alphabet); corduroy pants; a hickory or blue flannel shirt, cut down in front, studded with pockets and worn outside; a slouched hat and long beard, cavarly boots worn over the pants, knife and revolver belted to the side and a double barrel gun across the pommel, complete the costume as truly serviceable as it is unmilitary. Mules we find more intelligent and enduring than horses. On my last scout, with ten men, I rode seventy-five miles in twenty-six hours, rested my mules five or six hours, let them pick a little grass, and started back with the mules apparently as fresh as ever.’”

There was no part of Texas which Captain Kirby Smith did not explore and know thoroughly. In 1858, he took the long leave of absence to which he was then entitled, and in May sailed from Boston for a visit to Europe. But even as he started he began to feel that it was perhaps selfish in him thus to enjoy himself and he thought of returning in August. He took his full leave of absence, however, made a tour of Wales and England,

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and then went to the continent. European travel was not as common then as it is now, and the carefully preserved notes he made of his travels in France, Germany, Austria, and Italy, show the traveller of 1858 to have been, as ever, a careful observer and an interested beholder. He returned to America and rejoined his regiment at Camp Radziminski, New Mexico. In a letter to his mother from Fort Smith, en route to his regiment, written on the 7th of March, 1859, he stated that he had been very fortunate in his journey up the Arkansas, having "found a good stage of water and an excellent boat," and had arrived at Fort Smith without detention, while the steamer in advance of his was snagged and sunk and lost everything, and the one following his was burned to the water's edge. From Fort Smith he journeyed on horseback for four weeks, arriving in Camp Radziminski on the 14th of April. The camp was on the south slope of the Wichita Mountains, about one hundred and fifty miles from the head of Red River and about four hundred miles west of Fort Union, in New Mexico. It was surrounded by mountains. The captain thus described the location to his mother:

"Vast plains stretch away to the west and south, covered with countless herds of buffalo, while the big-horn and elk roam the mountains to the north.

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It is a bleak, cold section of country here, considerably elevated above the sea and right on the line of the trade winds, which blow a gale nine months of the year. We still have frost, and four days since it froze quite hard. We have six companies of Cavalry and one of Infantry and are now preparing for a grand expedition to the Canadian and Arkansas Rivers through a section of country entirely unexplored and hitherto known only to the Comanche and Kioway Indians."

Mail was received at the camp weekly from a point two hundred miles distant, being brought by a party of soldiers on mules, and these weekly mails were the only connection of the Camp with the civilized world. The proposed expedition mentioned by the Captain in his letter to his mother, comprised the whole command, six companies of Cavalry and fifty-four friendly Indians, about four hundred men in all, and set out on the 30th of April. Major Earl Van Dorn described as "a gallant and efficient officer who had defeated the Comanches near Camp Radziminski the previous September," was in command, with Captain Kirby Smith as second. The officers and men scouted in Indian style without tents, every man carrying his blanket and change of clothes on his saddle. Captain Kirby Smith wrote before setting out, "I am beset by the friendly Indians who arrived two days

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since. If they fight as effectually as they beg, they will prove a valuable addition to our command."

The great event of the expedition was the historic fight of Nessentunga (or Nescatunga) on the 13th of May, 1859. Although wounded in the fight, Captain Kirby Smith wrote to his mother the next day, and on the 2nd of June wrote from Camp Radziminski the following interesting account of the battle:

"Our command returned to this camp on the 31st of May, and the fine bracing air of this mountain region is rapidly restoring the health of our wounded. Even my Lieutenant, Fitzhugh Lee, who was shot under the right arm by an arrow which passed through both lungs, is fast convalescing. My own wound, though inconveniencing me but little, might have been serious. I was shot by an Indian standing a few feet in front of me, the ball passing through the upper part of the thigh, just missing the large artery and making a wound about four or five inches through. I continued in the saddle, giving the litter made for me, to one of my sick men (and had the satisfaction of probably saving his life), and rode into camp on the 18th day after the fight, with my wound healed up and almost well.

"By giving you a summary of our scout, you can form some ideas of our duties on this frontier, and

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you will see that in hardships, exposures and self-denials, our service is without a parallel in any country. Our horses last winter subsisted for a long time solely on the bark of the cotton-wood tree, the ground being covered with snow; and the men living in tents and exposed to all the severities of this hyperborean region. We keep out scouts winter and summer and in our expeditions. With all the wants and desires which civilization brings in her train, we actually move with fewer comforts and necessities than the savages who roam the plains in a state of nature. Our men carry no tents or shelter winter or summer. One blanket and their ration of pork, flour, coffee, sugar and salt, reduced to a minimum, is their allowance. With their saddles for pillows and the heavens for a canopy, they brave all the vicissitudes of a changeable climate; and lie out soaked with rain, for fifteen days in every thirty (as they did on our last scout), without a murmur or complaint.

“Our command (six companies of cavalry) about four hundred strong, left camp on the 30th of May, with an auxiliary force of forty-six Indians — Wacos, Caddos, Delawares, Tonkaways, Kechis, and Tehuacanas. Our allies, dressed up in all the finery of paint and feathers, promised loudly and recounted most heroic deeds of bravery they had in prospect; but once on the hunting grounds of the dreaded Comanche, they subsided, and in the most quiet and sub-

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missive manner accompanied our column, and were never seen beyond gunshot of our camp, unless duly escorted by a cavalry force.

“We are here a little south of the parallel of Washington in about the one hundredth degree of longitude west, and some two thousand feet above the sea. Our fight was more than two hundred miles from here, a little west of north, and nearly fourteen miles south of Fort Atchison [now abandoned], where the Independence and Santa Fé trail crosses the Arkansas. After leaving Camp we followed up through the mountains, a little tributary of Red River for forty-five miles (Elk Creek), and crossing the divide, travelled thirty miles through herds of Buffalo to the Washitaw. Here one of our parties captured an Indian boy, who, with two warriors, it appears, was on the way to reconnoiter our camp in the Wichita Mountains. Our prisoner informed us that five days’ north, near a large salt creek running east, were two camps; one ten miles long, of sixteen hundred lodges; the other of two hundred lodges; that the Kioways and the six bands of Comanches were all there, and had been discussing the alternative of war or peace. This, if true, gave a force of nine or ten thousand Indians—the lodge always holding at least five men, women and children.

“The excitement now became general, for our little Major, taking the boy for a guide, and promising

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to shoot him if he lied or misled us, pushed on for the Indian camp; and we knew he would charge twenty thousand Indians with as much *sang froid* as he would twenty. On the second day, thinking ourselves within striking distance, we marched until three o'clock in the afternoon and halted to rest and cook our dinner. Here, in a grand council, our Major announced his determination, by a forced march that night, to surprise the enemy's camps, attacking the larger camp first. The final orders were given, and the left wing was placed under my command. We marched all night in a violent thunderstorm, in almost Egyptian darkness, and over a country cut up by hills, ravines and precipices. Daylight found no enemy in our neighborhood, and our guide, upon being questioned, stated that it was still three days' to the camp.

"Camping that day on the South Canadian we found the river up, a full half-mile across and about ten feet of water in the channel. Next day, fording the river (which had fallen considerably during the night), our little guide conducted us nearly due north, across the North Canadian and Red Fork of the Arkansas and the Cimmaron. On the Cimmaron, soon after lighting our bivouac fires, we were encouraged by living evidences of Comanches. The alarm was given, and in a skirmish with a small party of Indians reconnoitering our camp, one Comanche was

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killed. The excitement became intense. Our guide said we were near the Grand Camp, and the Major to lighten the burden of our animals directed a portion of the provisions cached until our return. Marching some thirty miles north, our guides conducted us to the camp. The Indians had taken the alarm and had been gone for several days. From the signs and the number of lodges (the camp extending several miles along the stream), they had evidently been in force some two thousand. Soon after we had lighted camp fires our spies brought news of Indian trails in abundance; the larger and fresher about four days old, going north, and from the signs indicating a force of nearly two hundred. Now within thirty miles of Arkansas and in the heart of the Comanche country, we anticipated a speedy fight.

"The weather had been cold, it had rained and the men had slept in wet clothes nearly every night since leaving Radziminski. Next morning (the 13th) taking the larger trail, we pushed on in a northerly course in a continued storm of rain and sleet. Marching twenty-one miles, we halted to rest and graze our horses. Soon the alarm was given, and three Indians showed themselves on the hill above. A party saddled, and under Lieutenant Royall, gave chase. Soon the camp was again raised by the cry that Lieutenant Royall was engaged with a large force of Indians and needed assistance. In a few

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moments we were in the saddle, and in a driving rain, dashing at a headlong pace, over hill and through ravine, to the conflict. A race of three miles brought us to the scene. The Indians had ensconced themselves in a tangled thicket and woods lining a ravine through which a little stream, called the Nescatunga, wound its way. Lieutenant Royall had surprised and secured their horses; and the warriors, instead of escaping as their squaws urged, strung their bows and determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

“My company was one of the first on the ground; and dismounting my men, I dashed into the thicket after the Florida style of bush-fighting, and was shot before I had gone twenty yards; but I pushed on with my men until the recall sounded. The fight lasted but a short time, when the Indians, to use a western expression, ‘were literally wiped out.’ Forty-nine dead were counted in the space of one hundred yards, and thirty-six prisoners were taken — six men and thirty women. Of the thirteen killed and wounded of our command, six wounded were in my company — myself, my lieutenant, two sergeants and two men. The Indians were reached by forcing our way through a thick and tangled underbrush, and we would have lost a great many men had not the continued rain rendered the Indians’ weapons almost useless.

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“I must apologize for the long yarn I have spun out on such small capital.”

Shortly after this, Major Van Dorn, who was also wounded by an arrow in the fight of the 13th of May, was relieved and sent to San Antonio, and Captain Kirby Smith remained at Camp Radziminski in command of the Wichita Expedition. Operations in the field, however, were temporarily suspended, owing to difficulties arising between the Indians on the Texas reservation and the citizens. Five companies were moved down from Camp Radziminski, by forced marches, for the protection of the reservation, but the citizens dispersed. Captain Kirby Smith enjoyed the beautiful scenery, the luxuriant vegetation and cool, bracing air of the mountain region in which his camp was located. For two months he traveled about the Wichita Mountains exploring the surrounding country. When the expedition was broken up in the Fall of 1859, he was very glad, for since the 1st of April in that year, he and his men had lived on soldiers' rations, “without a vegetable or fruit to keep off scurvy; and visions of eggs, chickens and milk disturbed his slumbers and disappointed his waking hours.” In September, he wrote to his mother from Camp Radziminski:

“I am still at this Camp, but am daily in expectation of the train of wagons which will carry my com-

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pany to Camp Cooper. It will bring me some one hundred and fifty miles nearer the settlements, but in a very undesirable section of country. Cold and bleak in winter, hot and sultry in summer, it is regarded as one of the most forlorn posts in the department, without even the advantage of log huts to recommend it. Cooper has heretofore been the agency for the Texas Indians, but owing to the recent troubles, the reservation has been abandoned and the Indians removed some two hundred miles north to the Washitaw, near the Kansas boundary. The post (or rather camp, for the troops are under canvas), is still kept up, and nine companies of infantry and cavalry compose the garrison. Major Thomas, our Major, who was Lieutenant in Webster's Battery at Buena Vista, commands.

"Lieutenant Jenifer, my old First Lieutenant, has been retransferred to my company, and with Lieutenant Fitz Lee and myself compose the officers of the Camp. Jenifer was an old schoolmate at Benjamin Hallowell's, a classmate at West Point and comrade in the Mexican War, where he was Captain of the Third Dragoons. I am fortunate in having two of the most high-toned gentlemen in the regiment for my lieutenants. Major Thomas, on the 1st of next month, goes out with five companies of cavalry on an expedition against the Comanches. As my company will probably be at that time en route for

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Cooper, it is not likely to form part of the expedition. Major Thomas goes up to the head-waters of the Canadian among the spurs of the Rocky Mountains, and will be absent six or eight weeks."

On the 1st of November, the Captain wrote from Camp Cooper:

"Since my arrival at this place I have been very busy, under canvas, with all the trouble of six companies on my shoulders, and alternately shaking and sweating with intermittent fever.

"I arrived here and took command on the 3rd of October. Major Thomas, with the headquarters of the regiment and five companies, left the day previous on an expedition to the head-waters of the Red and Canadian Rivers. All the women of the regiment, some one hundred and fifty broken-down horses, and fifty or sixty broken-down men and women add to the trouble and responsibility (rather than to the efficiency) of my command. I must not forget the band, the only redeeming feature of the whole, which under the leadership of Mr. Kreutzer (formerly leader at the Academy of Music, New York), discourses good music three times a day. Major Thomas, on his return, goes north on a ten months' leave of absence.

"This will leave me the senior on duty with the

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regiment, and unless Colonel Lee or Hardee are ordered to their regiment, will leave me in command for several months. Lieutenant Lee is the only officer now at the post with me. Mr. Jenifer, if rumor speaks true, is bound, with an eight months' leave in his pocket, on some grand matrimonial speculation.

“Fifty miles west of Belknap, and about eighty miles beyond the line of settlements, is an elevated region of bare, rocky hills, open to the north winds which sweep over the central plateau of the continent three-fourths of the year. Sheltered by a bluff in the bottom of a little stream called the Clear Fork of the Brazos, and in one of the most dreary spots of this dreary section, Camp Cooper is located. Our tents are on pickets, which we haul nine miles, and our water, which flows down the Clear Fork from those inexhaustible gypsum beds west of us, supplies in our daily draughts, specifics for all the ills to which human nature is here subject. Epsom and Glauber salts can be had in any quantity and free of charge; and, from the taste, I should not be astonished to find it a pharmacopœia for all the drugs in the Medical Department.

“Colonel Hardee, with four companies of our regiment, first camped here, seeking shelter in the winter of '55, from a severe norther. And with that magnificent inertia which characterizes some of our army movements, here we've stuck. But I won't abuse

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the place. There may be worse in store for us. Wolves still exist in this region — further west they disappear — and the limestone rocks and gypsum beds of the Great Staked Plain may be too indigestible. even for the stomachs of Uncle Sam's soldiers. The overland mail passes within four miles of us, and is indeed a great convenience. Your last letter was only eleven days from St. Augustine, via Memphis. The overland mail passes twice a week each way. There are stations established from fifteen to thirty miles apart throughout the route, and the carriers travel day and night at the rate of seven or eight miles an hour. Their carriages pass over the desolate region between Belknap and the Pacific, often with only the driver and conductor; and, without exception, have always passed unmolested by Indians. . . . Forgive my complaining strain, but the wind whistles about my ears and the dust blows around my eyes till I am scarcely responsible for anything I write."

The Captain was removed to a more desirable location within a few weeks, and wrote from Camp Colorado, on Christmas Eve, 1859:

"I am now stationed here, with two companies of my regiment, and I hope permanently. The change is a desirable one. We have comfortable quarters, though built of pickets, and we are eighty miles

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nearer the settlements than we were at Cooper. The Post is prettily situated in a grove of oaks, on a little stream emptying into the Colorado River. It is eighty miles south of Belknap, forty from the line of settlements, and two hundred northwest of San Antonio. The country around us is hilly, with open glades of mesquite dotting the immense forest of post-oak, which stretches for miles to the north and west. Game is abundant; the woods are full of deer, the streams are filled with ducks and geese, and turkeys roost by thousands within a few miles of the Post. Yesterday evening I brought in six fine turkeys from a roost within fifteen minutes' ride of the Post, where there were more than a thousand turkeys within a space two hundred yards square. Teal and mallard we have been shooting within a few hundred yards of the quarters, and hams of fat venison hang around the kitchen door.

"I wish I could stock your larder for the Christmas holidays, and receive in return some butter and eggs. Of the latter commodities, and milk and vegetables, there is a perfect dearth. Our Christmas will be a dry one, without a glass of egg-nog to celebrate it with. Our nomadic life and continual shifting of home cuts us off from all luxuries. It is true, modern inventions give us a portable garden in the shape of canned and dessicated vegetables; but how I should relish a dish of ripe tomatoes, some old-fashioned

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boiled potatoes, or a generous pile of smoking roasting-ears!

“Our winter here has been unusually severe. The ground has been covered for several days with snow and sleet. One of the severest northers of the season caught me out thirty miles from the Post. We fortunately found shelter under a large bank, where there was plenty of wood, and with a demijohn of whisky, which was in the party, we kept up sufficient animal heat to weather the night through; though some of our party were frost-bitten, and a teamster, who got up in the night, was found frozen to death next morning. These northers come up suddenly, and often without ‘premonitory symptoms,’ and when accompanied with sleet and snow, are dangerous visitors.”

A fortnight later, the Captain wrote from the same post:

“I am comfortably situated here, at least for the frontier. My quarters are pleasant and furnished in good style; but we are all bachelors, beyond the reach of the luxuries of civilization, and sadly feel the lack of the refining influences of feminine society. My company is alone at the Post, the mounted troops having been mostly moved down on the Rio Grande frontier.

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“The Indians keep us busy; and, in small parties, are constantly depredating on the settlements. We are continually in the saddle, and have broken down and used up our horses in pursuing them. Between Fort Mason and Red River, there is a line of more than four hundred miles, covering one of the richest stock countries in the world; and, with but two companies of my regiment for its protection — my company at this post and Major Thomas, with one company, at Cooper. Thousands of animals are carried off, and with our utmost endeavors, we but occasionally meet with success in checking these depredations. Our men, too, are perfect Cossacks. They ride day and night, carry from seven to ten days’ provisions on their backs, sleep out on their saddle blankets in cold and rain without a murmur, and make their rifles subsist them almost entirely on their expeditions.

“A few days since, Lieutenant Lee with a party of my company, after riding seventeen hours through rain and sleet, overtook some marauding Indians, recovered all the stolen animals and killed two warriors who were driving the *cavallado*. One of the Indians was followed by Lee into a cedar brake, where after a two hours’ search, he discovered his presence by finding Mr. Indian on his (Lee’s) back. He had leaped from behind a rock. The two struggled and rolled over for some minutes with doubtful results, the

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Indian shooting through the sleeve of Lee's coat, while his own pistol exploded harmlessly in the struggle. Lee finally overcame the Indian by sheer strength, throwing him and blowing out his brains with a second shot of his revolver. Lee, who is a little fellow, parades the Indian's shield, head dress and arms with great pride."

On the 28th of January, 1860, the Captain wrote from Camp Colorado:

"Our mails are now more uncertain than ever. The quartermaster's department has no money, and contractors are indifferent about the future delivery of their mails. Want of funds in the pay department comes more nearly home, and unless we soon see that most welcome part of our military organization, the paymaster, some of us will take root in the soil, from pure inability to get away.

"I have been hunting a great deal lately. It is the only occupation I have. A few days since, in a two days' hunt, I killed some eight or ten buffalo; and in a trip some twenty miles below the Post, with three men, I brought back seventy odd turkeys. I have a fine pack of dogs and can get up a hare, wolf, deer or bear chase any moment. My game book shows already over two hundred partridges bagged by me this season over Ugly and

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Nell, my setter dogs. I believe I ought to stay in Texas. I have a great many friends, some interest, and, for an officer of the army, an undue amount of popularity throughout the western portion of the State. But I long for the sand-hills, I long for the pines, I long for the mullet and hominy of Florida."

Two letters written in March, 1860, while giving a further account of Texas life, and especially of the Captain's life at Camp Colorado, show also how deep-seated was his desire to enter the ministry:

"I have just returned from my visit to San Antonio, our great Texas metropolis and the boast of the State. I found an increase of some three or four thousand inhabitants since March, '58, many improvements and fine buildings, and three new churches in course of erection. I noted a change from my recollections of three years ago, when visits of etiquette were made by men armed to the teeth; when married men walked the streets with wife on one arm and a double-barrel shot-gun on the other; and trees in the suburbs were almost daily ornamented with fruit, whose hempen stems were never attached thereto by nature. San Antonio is now a thriving place of some fourteen thousand inhabitants, and is the center and depot for an extensive trade with the

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northern departments of Mexico. There is a large Episcopal congregation there, though as usual on the frontier, made up and supported largely, if not principally, by the army. A pretty little church designed by Upjohn, is in course of erection under the superintendence of Mr. Jones, the pastor of the congregation, who officiates there and visits the neighboring towns, feeding his lambs through a circuit of many miles extent.

“Mr. Jones is a missionary from Old Trinity, with a salary of some two or three hundred dollars a year; young, sincere, enthusiastic and untiring in his labors, he is scattering the seed in ground that has long lain fallow; and he will reap a harvest whose imperishable sheaves will stand forth to his immortal glory when the great Master calls up the husbandmen to their final settlement. How I envied him his labors! wicked though it be to do so. How willingly would I have changed places with him; how gladly have taken his work and his responsibilities. I have asked and desired for it for twelve years. I am not good enough. I have not a vocation. I may be too weak to take the final step. At all events my desires are unheeded. An all-wise God has given me work in a different sphere. He wills it not according to my wishes. His Will be done. . . .

“I have had no return of chills since that famous shake of mine at Cooper. My health is good and my

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quarters comfortable; and if I had the benefit of some little society and could occasionally hear the rustle of crinoline, I would have but little to complain of. We are three bachelors at the post and it is eighty miles through a wilderness to the first visitable feminine. My house is a stone building (the best in the department), well finished, with the rooms eighteen by twenty, high ceilings and a capacious porch extending around the whole structure in genuine Southern style. A grove of oaks and elms extends for some hundred yards in every direction, while a green sward stretches across the parade to the Company quarters and store houses. The floors are matted and carpeted; the windows curtained and the walls hung with choice paintings. Books and some few evidences of taste and cultivation which surround me are my only consolations for the loss of society and its refinements. Though in the woods, I have not yet lapsed into a savage state."

On the 5th of July he wrote:

"Since I last wrote I have remained idle at my post, doing nothing, relaxed and enervated by excessively hot weather. The country is dried up, the grass and vegetation parched, and the water in the streams fast disappearing with the continued drouth which seems a periodical incumbus upon Western Texas.

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“Small parties of Indians are still occasionally passing down towards the settlements, always on foot, generally two and three together and never more than ten or twelve in a party; keeping hid and leaving no trail on the rocky, dry ridges over which they travel, we never hear of them, but through their depredations; and our scouts are seldom able to follow on their track. These Indians are Comanches and Kioways from the Arkansas and Canadian region of country. They are Prairie Indians and expert horse thieves. Unlike our Florida Seminoles, they rarely kill, valuing a horse more than a dozen scalps. Good warriors and a formidable foe (when they fight), they always avoid a contest, even when vastly superior in numbers. Their tactics are to steal, not to fight; and their depredations on the Texas frontier correspond with their platform. Rarely is anyone killed, unless caught out alone and unarmed; while the whole frontier has been swept of its stock, and the frontier settlers, as they say, are ‘fairly afoot.’ In the counties just below us, some fifteen hundred or two thousand head of horses have been carried off during the past season.

“The Comanche comes down from the buffalo region (his home) generally in the early part of winter and on foot; the old broken-down pony which packs his dried meat, is abandoned beyond the settlements. Reaching the stock range, he remains hid, awaiting

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moonlight nights and a good opportunity. Suddenly pouncing upon and carrying off the unguarded *cavallado* of horses, he travels day and night, shifting from horse to horse of the herd, until he reaches the foot of the Staked Plains and prairies of the Canadian, where among the tracks of the countless buffalo, he defies even the instinct of an Indian to discover his trail. The speed with which these Indians travel is almost incredible, and is effected at the sacrifice of all the weakest and least enduring animals in the *cavallado*.

“I have here now the official report of an officer who from this post pursued a party that had stolen some one hundred head of horses in the county below. He says that between this point and the head of Red River, over three hundred miles, the Indians made but three halts, accomplishing eighty miles a day, and marking their route by the carcasses of animals which had given out and were lanced before being abandoned. The Comanche is a Prairie Indian, nomadic in his habits, shifting his home with the buffalo. He lives in the saddle and the horse is his only wealth. His arms are the bow and arrow and lance; in the use of the former he is so expert that he can keep three arrows in the air, and at full run will put six successive arrows in the side of his quarry in a space that could be covered by the palm of his hand. In the chase he has been known to shoot his arrow through a buffalo bull.

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“So much for the Indians. You must make allowances if I have spun out the subject unwarrantably; but our duties keep it constantly before us, and not a week passes without the departure or return of a scout; and we are constantly on the *qui vive* for the report of Indian sign or depredations.”

On the 24th of September, 1860, Captain Kirby Smith wrote a letter to his mother, which was lost in the mail of that date between Camp Colorado and Fort Chadbourne. The express men got drunk, and either robbed or destroyed the contents of the mail-bag. The letter contained a draft on the Assistant Treasurer, which the Captain was remitting to his mother. On the 10th of November, he wrote:

“I returned yesterday from a bear hunt in the mountains some twenty-five miles west of us. My pack of hounds behaved excellently and we killed every bear started. Well mounted, I had some thrilling and exciting chases, giving Bruin myself the *coup du mort* in at least one fierce struggle. Several of our dogs were hurt, but we returned laden with spoils, and without accident. I only refer to the above hunt because of the sequence:

“Returning across the prairie some six miles from the Post, we stumbled upon the letters stolen with the mail which was robbed in September last. My

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letter with the check to you was among the fragments. You will see where the end was torn off, the newspapers projecting, the contents were deemed worthless and the letter was cast aside. It was the only valuable recovered. Quartermaster's checks to the amount of some three thousand dollars, and a package of money, were lost. I have enclosed the letter to you, old as it is, without venturing to read its contents and without changing the envelope.

"I am having a quiet time. The Government, in one of its periodical fits of economy, has ordered our forage to be stopped and scouting to cease, while its employes at Washington and in high places will speculate the more extensively and audaciously. I should not complain, however, for I have an easy time; drill my men in the evening, and in the morning kill a few brace of partridges or a fine gobbler."

In an effort to quiet his mother's anxiety regarding him, the Captain wrote to her on the 23rd of November:

"Western Texas is a remarkably healthy region. Its very dryness and the absence of dews, while retarding the settlement of the country, exempt it from epidemics. The outdoor life and constant exercise which are a necessity of frontier existence, add to my health. The savage Indian, the 'Wild Comanche,'

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is the great bugbear of Texas, and he increases in numbers, magnitude and ferocity as you recede from him. Judging from newspaper accounts, you might suppose the country laid waste and devastated by a savage foe; yet, go where you will along the frontier, you everywhere find settlers scattered, often ten, twenty or thirty miles from a neighbor, without any means of defence or a thought of danger. They leave their women and children alone sometimes for days. Yet such a thing as a murder seldom occurs. You see moccasin tracks, horses are stolen, but blood is never shed. Not more than three or four cases have come under my notice in the last six years. The Comanche steals, but rarely kills, except in self-defence. His boast is that he has stolen his enemy's horses without risk to himself.

"Thinking over our frontier service, and recalling the experience of eight years in this line, I can remember but two officers killed in the numerous affairs which our troops have had with the Indians. And I really believe that the danger is greater in the ordinary accidents of life in the southern and middle states than it is in our military service in this healthy region."

On the 6th of December, 1860, he wrote the last letter which need be quoted as giving an insight into his frontier experiences:

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"I have just returned from Chadbourne, where I have been absent for eleven days. The distance, though short of eighty miles, requires three days' travel. Buffalo were making their appearance, and their early advent south is here regarded as significant of a severe winter. On my return home, I made a fine bag of birds — partridges, ducks (mallard and teal). Geese, turkeys and swan were abundant. On the last day, I had an exciting chase of three miles after a large bear.

"You may feel some curiosity in regard to my mode of travel through this wild region. I always ride on horseback. It leaves me at liberty to move about as I choose, to hunt off the road. With my gun, revolver, knife and matches, I have a woodsman's independence. If overtaken by night, I soon build my fire and broil my meat with all the relish of an experienced frontiersman.

"I always travel, too, with my coach-and-four and outriders, and you will smile when I tell you that the aforesaid stylish conveyance is for the accommodation of my dogs. It is one of Doroty's ambulances, well fitted up with movable seats. The body is six feet long, and is large enough to spread down my mattress and leave room for my trunk, tent, mess arrangements and 'Ugly.' In the morning, I designate the camping ground for the night. My equipage and escort dash off at the rate of seven miles an hour; and

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when I ride into camp in the afternoon or after dark, I find my tent pitched and blankets spread, a roaring fire, a woodsman's feast smoking before it, and a woodsman's appetite to add zest to the spread. In regard to my dashing conveyance, it looks like extravagance, but it really costs nothing. My saddler and blacksmith keep it in repair. There is always surplus forage in the company, and the men all regard it as a favor when they are allowed to handle the reins.

"Besides my ambulance, my domestic menage consists of two horses and a hunting mule; a pack of stag hounds and four setters — old 'Ugly' heading the list. In addition, I keep bear dogs, but their canine respectability is too doubtful to allow them near the premises. They harbour about the company quarters.

"I wish I were near enough to supply your larder for Christmas. I noticed this morning a large pack load of turkeys going to the company. They came from a little stream eight miles off, which through the winter is an inexhaustible poultry yard. Deer and turkey are always hanging about the company kitchen, while the buffalo robes and bear and panther skins nailed on the walls and scattered around the rooms are the trophies of a more manly sport."

CHAPTER VIII

THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT

UP to the early part of 1860, there is no indication from his letters that Captain Kirby Smith was taking any interest in the discussions that were going on between the North and the South over the question of Slavery and over the related question of State-Rights. Although a Connecticut man by birth, Judge Joseph Lee Smith, upon becoming a Floridian, became a slave owner, and in February, 1845, wrote to his son, then in West Point: "Your servant boy, Aleck, thrives rapidly and will be a useful waiter for you in a year or two." In the latter part of his frontier experiences Captain Kirby Smith came in possession of Aleck and refers to him in every letter he writes. The Captain was unquestionably a humane master. In August, 1859, he wrote: "I enclose you, my dear mother, a letter of Aleck's for his mother. Will you direct it and forward it, and when you write, send me her address for Aleck's benefit?" The following November, he wrote: "I am glad ——— expects to purchase Violet. If she wishes, I will advance the necessary amount and have her purchased in my name. I shall in all probability die an old bachelor and am able to support all the old family ne-

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groes if necessary. Peggy must not be sold unless I am the purchaser." The messages sent by Aleck to his mother and "Aunt Peggy" are most scrupulously set forth in the Captain's letters, while the boy's anxiety to receive a letter from his mother is shared by his master who repeatedly writes on behalf of the negro boy; and finally declares in a letter written to his mother in November, 1860: "Make Peg write to Aleck, or write a few lines for her yourself, and give him some news of his mother. I almost feel like voting for Lincoln when I see families broken up and children so completely separated from their parents. Speaking of Peggy, she must not go out of the family. I should like to purchase her if it can be done. It would be a great comfort to me to have her here. Aleck is a good boy, zealous in his service and sincerely devoted to me, I believe. He was careless at first, but has improved very much. He remembers his early instructions in religion, and is, I believe, honest and truthful."

But the best commentary on the real devotion of master and slave as exemplified in the case of Captain Kirby Smith and Aleck is found in the letters written by the latter after the death of General Kirby-Smith in 1893. Aleck served his master faithfully and was implicitly trusted by him until the close of the Civil War. He in some way subsequently became a physician and practiced his profession among his

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people in Florida, and acquired a considerable standing among them. Upon learning of General Kirby-Smith's death in 1893, he wrote a tribute to his memory which is very significant in the sincerity with which it was written. He died in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1897.

It is not the intention of the Editor to offer an apology for Captain Kirby Smith's ranging himself on the side of the South in the struggle that was then approaching, or by any labored explanation to reconcile his conduct with his well-known character. The time has gone by when such apologies or explanations are demanded. It is almost universally recognized that any man placed in the position of Captain Kirby Smith and acting conscientiously as he undoubtedly did, would decide precisely as he did. No one questions the conscientious motives of Robert E. Lee any more than one would question the motives of Major George H. Thomas, who appears to have been placed in a similar position and who yet decided to go with the North. The letters which follow are not intended as an apology, but rather as illustrating the course of events, and more particularly the influences brought to bear upon Captain Kirby Smith, perhaps quite like those brought to bear upon a vast number of others at the time, which resulted in their entering the struggle on the side of the South from a

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sense of right and duty, and from no motive of self-aggrandizement or other ulterior designs; and they will add to the bulk of testimony readily at hand, that there was a principle of right and patriotism and of conscience which actuated the leaders of the Southern Confederacy.

In the latter part of January, 1860, Captain Kirby Smith wrote to a friend in Florida, enclosing a communication which he wished "forwarded to the Governor of Florida when the proper time came for doing so." In regard thereto he wrote his mother from Camp Colorado:

"I am so far out of the world that a kingdom might be lost and won before I could hear of it. What Florida is doing I do not know, but when the worst comes my lot will be cast with the fortunes of my State. Though far beyond the influence of the secession movement, I feel its effects; a restless, longing anxiety to know the worst possesses me, while a feeling of most indefinable dread overwhelms me. I picture to myself day and night the most gloomy consequences of the reckless precipitancy of our people. A fratricidal war looms on the horizon. The course of some of the Cotton States, the tone of feeling, the messages of their Governors, the acts advocated in their legislatures, are to me most incomprehensible.

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“Instead of cultivating a good feeling with, do they wish to alienate the affections of their own brethren of the Border States? Instead of a United South, do they wish a rival power formed between them and the Abolition States on the Canada frontier? If they do, they will lose Louisiana and Texas, and dwindling down to a fourth-rate power, will find it as hard to maintain themselves at home as it will be difficult to command respect and influence abroad. But I won’t trouble you with my forebodings. I can only commit our cause to that Providence who tempers the storm to the afflicted, and pray that we may be spared the horrors of a civil war.”

Two months later, he wrote:

“You are enthusiastic, my dear mother, on the topics of the day. The excitement must be intense, the perils great, when a sober, staid old lady of more than seventy, writes as you do. The waves of sectional excitement do not reach us here; and we are probably better—certainly more dispassionately—able to judge of the future; to reason of the past. I do not myself anticipate the calamities you believe so near. That great, all-wise God, who sustained our fathers and who built up this glorious fabric, will surely take us through even greater perils than this. The horrors of a civil war—and such a war as it must

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be, a war of races — is surely not in store for us. There are too many good and conscientious men in both sections of our glorious land to permit it.

“Be assured, my dear mother, that my affection and hope are with the State of my birth, and should the evil days come, my sword and my services will be cheerfully and freely devoted to her service and in her support.”

A few months later, he expressed his gratification that his mother and aunt were going north on a visit, but adds: “I would myself rather remain south of Mason and Dixon’s Line and avoid all contact with such atrocities as the Sumnerites and Sewardites of the present day have proved themselves to be.”

In September, 1860, he wrote:

“Our training makes us an efficient body of partisans, and if the irrepressible conflict does come, the lessons learned on this frontier may be of service in a better cause. . . . Mr. Seward’s speech in Michigan makes the abolition of the army and navy as much a fundamental doctrine of the Black Republican Party as the abolition of slavery. Lincoln’s election seems more than probable. And where so black and threatening a cloud overshadows the horizon, it behooves the prudent man to prepare for the coming storm.

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Too old to begin in a new profession, too honest to try my hand at cattle lifting (the chief business of this frontier) I'll e'en take to cattle raising. No bad business in this country. Our sutler here and myself have selected a beautiful spot on one of the tributaries of the Colorado for our ranch. We purchased four hundred cattle at \$8.00 a head, in August last, and we already number thirty-six young additions to our stock."

On the 10th of November, he wrote:

"I see a great deal in the papers about Secession and Irrepressible Conflict, and might suppose that ominous clouds threatened in the event of Lincoln's election. What does Mr. —— think of it? What are his views? I know he is an upright, honest man, conservative and patriotic, and too intelligent to be deceived by scheming politicians.

"I would give a great deal to know what is going on among you. Do subscribe for the St. Augustine paper for me. You need not read it if it is an objectionable sheet. It would be precious to me; every line about the old town will be of interest. I am a Southern man in all my feelings, and will stand by the fireside whilst the roof tumbles about my ears — and such I fear will be the result in the event of a violent secession."

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On the 23rd of November, he wrote:

“We have not yet received the election returns; but the evidences are strong of Lincoln’s election by an overwhelming majority north of Mason and Dixon’s Line. What will be the result? God grant that *our* people may think wisely and deliberately before acting; else we may act rashly and repent vainly. The seeds of discord have been sown broadcast over the land. Let us all earnestly beseech the Great Husbandman lest the weeds of disunion overrun the crop and the whole field be laid waste. I fear for the results. God grant that we may weather the storm without dismantling the ship. His will be done.”

In a letter of Christmas Eve, 1860, he wrote:

“I feel concerned at the state of public feeling at home. I fear that our people will act too precipitately. We have grievances and I know they must be redressed, and the slavery question settled definitely and forever. But how much more righteous our cause, how much more dignified our position, and how much more boldly we can put it before the world, if we only wait till all our Southern States can act in unison; and together, calmly and deliberately and without threats make our demands upon the Northern States. They will not be granted. I fear no

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compromise, satisfactory to us will be made by the Republican Party. But we can then set up our flag, a powerful united people with a just cause, ready and prepared for that war which must inevitably follow, sooner or later, the rupture of the Union. God grant that we may yet have a clear horizon, and that such wise measures may yet be taken as will dissipate the storm which has so suddenly burst upon our glorious Union.

“Tell Mr. — that right or wrong I go with the land of my birth.”

On the 3rd of February, 1861, he wrote the following letter upon the subject which was causing great searchings of heart among the officers of the Second Cavalry:

“Just returned from a scout, my dear mother, and an opportunity offers for sending a few lines to San Antonio. We have had no mails for a week but from all accounts the disunion feeling increases. Florida, with the remaining Cotton States, has undoubtedly seceded. All the attending evils which I fear have not been calmly and deliberately considered, will now try men’s souls and test their wisdom. Dissension, war, an exhausted and impoverished country loom up in the distance. A Southern Confederacy will be formed, I hope, embracing Kentucky, Virginia, and those

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conservative Border Slave States, whose calmness and judgment will prevent our Cotton States from running into ultraism. If a Confederacy of Cotton States alone is formed, the slave trade will be reopened, a policy unwise in itself and discreditable, to say the least of it.

"I speak freely, my dear mother, for my fortunes are indissolubly linked with a Southern Confederacy, and I would support with a clear conscience a people whom I wish not only great and powerful, but honored and respected.

"Captain Evans of my regiment passed out on leave a few days since. He says he has been offered the appointment of Brigadier-General of Cavalry by Governor Pickens. Van Dorn, another of my comrades, has received a General's commission from his State, Mississippi."

To show the character of the influences brought to bear upon Captain Kirby Smith at this time, let the following extracts from letters suffice. The first was from his mother and bears date December 27, 1860:

"I have written so often and so fully upon the absorbing topics of the day that (if you have received all my letters) you will almost dread to see a letter from me. I have no time now to enlarge upon these subjects. If you receive newspapers you see the prog-

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ress of events. The Secession ball is rolling and soon there will be a Southern Confederacy. A few days now decides the fate of Florida By this mail I send you a paper containing the startling intelligence of the evacuation of Fort Moultrie. We cannot understand the action of Major Anderson. I hope he can explain. If he has done this upon his own responsibility, he has placed himself, in public opinion, in no enviable position. We fear the consequences of this act.

“We see many resignations of army officers from the South, mostly from South Carolina. She has invited them to come home and guaranteed a provision for them. Your native State will hardly do this. I trust you will not feel yourself bound by a sense of honor or patriotism to take this step at present. The time may come when the North and South will resort to arms to settle the troubles. Then you will do your duty, I know. Mr. — says you must not be hasty on this subject. He is warmly for Secession. It took him a long time to make up his mind. Now he thinks it is the imperative duty of the Slave States to withdraw from the Union. They can no longer, with safety or honor, remain in it.

“Mr. — of this place has just received a letter from Captain Walker, First Cavalry, offering his services to this State, and giving references as to his qualifications as a military man We think he

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is rather premature. Colonel Hardee, you know, has been purchasing arms for Georgia in New York and now has an offer from Georgia to go to England for the same purpose I see from my window a group of men busily employed in preparing a tremendous flagstaff to be erected on the plaza. The flag is now being made by the ladies We are all here in a state of excitement May God bless and preserve you and may He guide and direct you in these times of trial."

On the 16th of January, 1861, the mother wrote:

"It is not for me to give you advice, yet I can think of scarcely anything else than what influence the political changes which are now rending our unhappy country, may have upon you. Our hearts are steeped in sadness and anxiety. Forbodings of evils yet to come depress us. We are threatened with the greatest calamity that can befall a nation. Civil war stares us in the face. Indeed it is war already, and although we feel that our cause is a righteous one, we know not how it is to end. God alone knows. In His hands we are, and He knows what is best for us.

"You can form no idea of the excitement which prevails all over the Southern country. It is only by seeing the various articles which are issued from the press, warm with the feeling of the moment. Our State has

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seceded, and it was announced here by the firing of cannon and musketry and much shouting. A large flag, made by the ladies is now waving on the square. The device on a blue ground, a tall palmetto tree (in honor of Carolina) an eagle bearing a hemisphere, two stars and the motto 'Let us alone.' By order of the Governor of this State, the Fort, Barracks and Federal property were taken possession of. Cannon are mounted on the ramparts of the Fort (a water Battery) to defend it if any attempt should be made to retake. Ladies are preparing a hospital. If necessary, not only lint and bandages but cots and comforts will be found.

"Is not all this dreadful? I wish I had not lived to see this day. Unfortunately there is no military head, no military science here, or, I suppose, in the State. . . . There are plenty of young men now under arms, but what will all this amount to?

"Georgia is probably this day out. Colonel Hardee resigns immediately. He told me he expected to be called into the service of his State, which has ample resources and a military organization. Colonel Hardee will no doubt have a high standing He has promised to write to you, but says it is difficult to advise. But a Southern Confederacy will organize an army. Jefferson Davis will have much to do with this. Bear this in mind I do not presume to advise you, but your own feelings and knowledge of things will decide you. — says hold on till events

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make it necessary to leave the Federal army. May God in His gracious goodness give you guidance in this. That true honor and discretion will govern you, I have no doubt. That you have higher destinies than a life as a backwoodsman or cattle raiser, I fully believe. . . . God grant that we may see you once more and that the distractions of the times may pass and peace and quiet succeed. May God hold you in the hollow of His hand. May He guide, bless and preserve you."

Colonel Hardee, his life-long friend, wrote to Captain Kirby Smith in accordance with his promise, from Savannah, on the 23rd of January, 1861:

"Florida and Georgia, our native States, have both seceded and I feel confident that we are destined to have a Southern Confederacy. I do not think there is any possibility of a compromise being made which will cause the scattered fragments to reunite again. Under these circumstances an all-important question presents itself: At what time shall we resign? The State of Florida has passed a resolution inviting the officers of the Army and Navy to return to the service of the State with the same rank and pay which they at present receive from the general government. A similar resolution has been introduced into the Georgia legislature but it has not yet been acted on. It

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may or it may not pass. Whether it does or not, I consider that Georgia has a paramount claim on my allegiance and I have written to the Governor of the State to say that I am ready to resign whenever he may need my services, or whenever in his judgment it may be proper for me to do so. I am awaiting his reply and shall be governed by what he recommends.

“I am sure you feel as I do about sustaining the South, but your case is somewhat different from mine. The Florida resolution required all officers desirous of serving the State to signify their intention to do so within thirty days. This with you is impossible. Unless therefore a collision of arms takes place before the Southern Confederacy is organized, I don't think I would resign. There is no immediate need of your services, you are out of the way, and you will not be forgotten when a Southern army is organized. If on the frontier I think this would be my course of action, but much must depend on the state of your feelings. There is no probability that you will be called upon to act against the South and this should be duly considered in making up your decision. If I thought your failure to resign now would interfere with your appointment in the Southern Confederacy, I would recommend you to resign immediately, but I do not believe it will. Colonel Huger, although pressed by South Carolina, refused to resign until a Southern Confederacy should be organized. I do not approve his con-

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duct, for called on by the State he should have resigned at once. I mention this to show the state of feeling among some of our officers."

Other influences might have been brought to bear upon Captain Kirby Smith, but surely these were sufficient to decide his course of action, and on the 3rd of March, 1861, he resigned his commission in the United States Army. That day he wrote to his mother from San Antonio, Texas, as follows:

"I have forwarded my resignation and am *en route* for Florida and the Southern Confederacy. Texas has demanded and received all the public property in the State and orders have been issued for the evacuation of the troops. I do not know what has been done, but I feel that I cannot, in the present coercive attitude of the North, remain any longer in service. I have been promoted to a Majority and in a few weeks would have been a Lieutenant-Colonel of Cavalry. Rank with me now is no consideration, and I would rather shoulder a musket in the cause of the South than be Commander-in-Chief under Mr. Lincoln. I shall go to Montgomery on my way home and if my services are needed by Mr. Davis my sword will be placed at his disposal. I will give you full particulars on my arrival."

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On the 25th of March he wrote again from Indianola, Texas:

"I have been awaiting here, several days, the arrival of a steamer, and you may imagine how restless and anxious I am at this delay — how desirous to be in the midst of events, which are so fast bringing the problems of our country's future to a solution. I am on my way home, having resigned on the 3rd of this month.

"Every tie that connects me with the army has been broken; profession, kin, all the associations of my life have been given up; and not suddenly or impulsively, but conscientiously, and after due deliberation. I was the senior Major of my regiment at the time, and the youngest man in the army for my position, and am twenty years in advance of my contemporaries. What my future may be I cannot tell. I have no expectations. I only know I sacrifice to my principles more than any other officer in the army can. I have the consolation that my conscience upholds me in my course. No one can accuse me of mercenary motives. I will write to you *en route*, should I be delayed. Write to me. Direct to Montgomery. It is on my route, and I shall go to Mr. Davis."

These two letters were forwarded by his mother to Mr. Jefferson Davis and not unlikely reached the pro-

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visional President of the Confederate States, before Captain Kirby Smith's visit to Montgomery.

While the question of his resignation was still pending, two incidents occurred which illustrate the high sense of honor of Edmund Kirby Smith and his ideas of his relations to the Federal Government. Before leaving Texas he received a letter from his nephew, Joseph Lee Kirby Smith, son of the brother who had died after the battle of Molino del Rey, in Mexico. The young man wrote to his uncle as his dearest and almost his sole male relative, asking counsel and advice as to the course he should pursue. He expressed the desire not to be separated from his uncle in the struggle which was then felt to be pending.

The Captain's reply to this letter was that the question was one which every conscientious man had to decide for himself through conviction of right. However great the sacrifice, he believed that *his* duty put him with the people of his State. With the nephew the case was different. The young man's mother was a Northern woman; the young man himself was born under the United States flag in a Northern garrison and had no interests in the South. In the expressed opinion of the uncle, the nephew belonged on the side of the North, and there he went. He rose to the rank of Brigadier-General in the Federal Army, and died of wounds received at Corinth. More than

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once during the war the uncle received kind messages from his nephew fighting in the army on the other side.

After the surrender of all the public property in the State of Texas, by General Twiggs, then in command of the Texas Division of the Federal Army, to General Ben McCulloch in command of the Texas Militia, the latter sent a demand to Captain Kirby Smith, in command of Camp Colorado, for his surrender. The Captain refused to surrender the garrison. He had resigned his commission in the Federal Army, and was turning the garrison over to the United States Government, but so long as he was in command there he would fight for the protection of that garrison and all the property of the United States Government committed to his care. And he strongly intimated that if General McCulloch chose to fight it would be all the worse for him. The demand for surrender was not pressed and there can be no charge of any dishonorable act in connection with Edmund Kirby Smith's withdrawal from the army of the United States Government to enter the service of the Confederate States.

CHAPTER X

THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR AND THE BATTLE OF MANNASSAS

After a visit to St. Augustine, Florida, Captain Kirby Smith returned in April, 1861, to Montgomery, Alabama, the Provisional Capital of the Confederacy, to find that he had been ordered, first, to the command of New Orleans and the forts on the Mississippi; but as he had experienced some tedious delays *en route*, and the people had urged "the immediate appointment of an army officer of experience" to such an important command, the order had been rescinded and he was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel of a cavalry regiment of which Earl Van Dorn was appointed Colonel, and ordered to the command of the Department of Texas. After writing a report for the War Department on the defenses of Texas, this second order was withdrawn and he was ordered to Virginia, to which State large bodies of troops were being sent, and where, as the Secretary of War, Mr. Walker, assured him, there were important duties for him to perform. He "had strong hopes of being present at the capture of Washington City." On the 20th of April, he wrote from Montgomery to his mother:

"I am ordered posthaste to Lynchburg, Virginia, to take command of the Confederate forces there.

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Eight thousand men are now *en route* for that point, and my instructions are to organize, muster into service, and equip these troops as they arrive. Lynchburg is the strategic point for all operations on the Virginia frontier and they have given me one of the most responsible positions yet assigned to any officer of the Confederate Army. Bragg and Beauregard are in the provisional army. I shall endeavor, by activity and energy, to make up for lack of ability and leave the result with that all-wise Providence who has so far guided and protected me. The Secretary has provided an efficient staff to accompany me.

“Lynchburg is the point where our principal magazines, supplies, etc., must be collected, and it will be the centre of our operations. . . I have been interesting myself for my friends and hope they may receive appointments. There will be none made, however, till after the meeting of Congress, when the army will be increased. My advice to my friends seeking for military glory would be to get positions in their State troops, as all these troops will be taken into the provisional army; and thus, with better positions during the war, they will stand a better chance for a permanent appointment in the peace establishment.”

The following extracts from letters to his mother give not only an account of Colonel Kirby Smith's movements, but also a series of interesting pictures

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of the conditions existing in the early days of the Confederate Army:

“Lynchburg, Va., May 10th, 1861.

“Surrounded by military preparations, with troops arriving and departing daily, with the tramp of armed men and the rapid roll of the drum ringing hourly in my ears, I feel as if the realities of war were fast closing upon us. And when I see the best blood of our country enrolled, the youth of sixteen and the aged sire, side by side; the statesman, planter, and minister of the gospel in the ranks — my heart throbs with anxiety and I deprecate a contest which must be baptised in the blood of all we hold dear or good in the land.

“I fear ours is to be no ordinary struggle. A settled determination to resist to the bitter end — with feelings inflamed and embittered by the outrages and vandalisms of the Northern people — will bring on a conflict in which, not only the laws and courtesies of war, but the common principles of humanity, will be cast to the wind.

“I am working day and night in the duties of my position; troops are arriving and departing daily. Norfolk, Harper’s Ferry and Richmond are the objective points of the campaign, and if the gigantic preparations making at the North, directed by the clear head and active mind of General Scott, are signifi-

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cant of coming events, we may soon expect to hear of fierce and desperate encounters at each of the above points.

"I have here now one Alabama regiment, one Tennessee and one Mississippi regiment. Every train comes laden with its warlike freight, and as fast as the regiments are mustered in and organized, they move on towards one of the above points. Virginia is fast calling her sons into the field; it is only the lack of arms that keeps tens of thousands from marching to her frontier. There is no lack of the spirit of '76 in the Old Dominion, and her chivalry from the length and breadth of the land are offering their services. Six thousand of the Virginia troops rendezvous at this point. Thirty thousand will probably take the field. What is most needed is one directing mind—an active and competent head. Governor Letcher is an incubus and the selection of General Lee to command the Virginia forces is unfortunate. There are two systems working here; the Virginia Army and the Confederate troops have separate heads and are acting under different authority. Mr. Davis is anxiously looked for to systematize under one control these conflicting authorities."

"Lynchburg, Va., May 16th, 1861.

"I am too tired to write more than a few lines. We have as yet had no collision, but the forces on both

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sides are rapidly concentrating around Norfolk, Harper's Ferry and Alexandria. We have some 8,000 men at Harper's Ferry, and to-day, I dispatched two regiments, Mississippians, to that point. Colonel Jackson is in command there—a contemporary of mine at West Point and a brave man who will defend his post to the death. General Lee has now been placed in command of all the forces in the State, but we hope Mr. Davis will shortly appear on the field of operations or that Johnston or Beauregard will be assigned to the command.

“The regiments rendezvousing at this point are generally undisciplined and uninstructed. The Tennessee contingents, especially, are a rough, uncouth, democratic mob from the mountains, good rifle shots at home, but most intractable soldiers abroad.

“The Seventh Regiment, I see, has returned to New York—served out their term and gone home, disgusted with the war.”

“Lynchburg, Va., May 21st, 1861.

“I leave tomorrow for Harper's Ferry. General Jo. Johnston passed through from Montgomery this morning. He takes command of the troops collected at Harper's Ferry. I report to him for duty and probably will participate in the first decisive action that takes place on the Virginia frontier.

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"I have sent six regiments from this point since my arrival: Two Mississippi and one Alabama to Harper's Ferry; two Tennessee to Richmond; one Alabama to Norfolk; one Arkansas is now here, and one Tennessee *en route* to this point.

"Our men are poorly armed and equipped; the old altered flint lock musket is the chief arm that has been issued to them. One of the bad phases of States' Rights here exhibits itself. Each State in its sovereign capacity seized the arms, etc., in the forts, and arsenals within its limits. Instead of turning them over to the Confederate Government they appropriated them, at least the efficient ones, to their own use.

"It is true, we make up in spirit and determination what we lack in means of defence. We feel our cause is just and Providence in His good time will bring it to a prosperous conclusion.

"My good friend Major Clay, who has been my Adjutant-General, my roommate, and indeed, my bedfellow part of the time, will write to you if any news comes to him that will interest you. He will probably be detained some time here. He is a brother of the Senator and an especial friend of the Secretary of War and President.

"Mr. Davis will start for Virginia as soon as the bills passed by Congress are signed. I hope he may not

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come too late to remedy the blunders of General Letcher and the tardiness of Lee.”¹

“Harper’s Ferry, June 2nd, 1861.

“I am still at this point, but hourly expecting orders to move. Our force is composed of volunteers entirely. I would give the whole of them for one regiment of regulars, though the best blood in the country is found in the ranks; they cannot stand the hardships; they will not submit to the necessary discipline; and they are so illy provided with everything from arms to clothing, that they are scarcely efficient in the field. The force moving towards this point

¹ The references to General Lee in this letter and in that of May 10th must not be allowed to give the reader the impression that Colonel Kirby Smith was disposed to criticise General Lee. Colonel Kirby Smith was criticising, first, the lack of organization—the placing of State troops upon an equal footing with those of the Confederacy; and secondly, the placing of General Lee in the command of State troops instead of in command of the armies of the Confederacy. And his mention of Lee’s “tardiness” was the chafing of the average Colonel at the superior officer’s deliberateness and caution. General Kirby-Smith always had the same admiration for General Lee as when under him at West Point, and which he expressed when appointed to the same regiment with him for frontier service. Their fields of service were widely separated subsequently, so that the opportunities for General Kirby-Smith to express his admiration of the great Confederate leader in his letters were limited. But that he had this admiration no one who knew General Kirby-Smith will for a moment doubt.

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from each direction is so overwhelming that our only policy is the Fabian: We must fall back, seeking the time and the opportunity for an attack; and by celerity in movement make up for our deficiency of force.

“My good friend McClellan is Major-General, second in command to Scott, and is moving down from Wheeling, by the Baltimore and Ohio road, with 20,000 men; General Patterson from Pennsylvania is some twenty miles north of us at Chambersburg, with 13,000 men, whilst General McDowell operates from Alexandria by Leesburg and Manassas Gap with a column of ten or fifteen thousand, bringing upon our rear forty or fifty thousand men, commanded by able generals.

“This miserable doctrine of States’ Rights (as far as military matters are concerned), is now working its natural consequences. We have no army, no concert of action, no proper provision for arming and equipping our men. The imbecility and inaction of some of our State governments is and will be almost as disastrous as treachery; and the whole manner in which matters have been ordered and regulated on this frontier can be designated by no better word in the vocabulary of military terms than by the word ‘blunder.’ This is all *entre nous*.

“What will become of us, God only knows. We are in the hands of that Providence who knows the justice of our cause.

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“Our General Johnston is the first military man of the day — active, experienced and intelligent, with a good though limited staff, he will do all that can be done. He comes too late to remedy the faults of others, and I believe will be condemned, whatever course he pursues. Major Whiting is our Engineer Officer. He was my classmate and regulated the operations against Sumter. Major McLean, who married a daughter of Colonel Sumner, is our Quartermaster. I am Adjutant-General. Aleck is with me. I have dropped all my baggage, retaining only a pair of blankets and a change of underclothes.”

“Harper’s Ferry, June 9th, 1861.

“An opportunity presents itself for sending a few lines by safe conduct beyond the reach of interception. There is no knowing when this may happen again, threatened as we are by overwhelming forces of the enemy within one day’s march of our line of communications.

“Our men are in good spirits, confident of success. An overweening confidence, I fear, for they are but a handful (some 7,000), poorly armed and equipped, and, to my eyes, not far removed from an irregular, undisciplined mob, valiantly defeating ten times their number in prospective; but who, I fear, should they meet with unexpected resistance, will give way in confusion. Our cause is just; the earnest and fervent

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prayers of thousands arise in our behalf. Ten times ten thousand intercede for our success, and our ministers lead our hosts. Captain Pendleton, an Episcopal minister, and a graduate of West Point, commands a battery of Virginia artillery; reads service and administers the communion to his men. A good soldier and a good pastor, he is both a temporal and a spiritual leader of his men.

“General Patterson’s force, coming from Pennsylvania by the way of Chambersburg, is some fifteen or twenty thousand strong. Their advance column camped last night at Sharpsburg, twelve miles off on the Maryland side—4,000 regulars, infantry. My old regiment of cavalry is under Major (now Colonel) Thomas, a Virginian; and a battery of artillery under Doubleday, of Sumter notoriety. McClellan, when last heard from, was advancing by the B. & O. railway from Grafton, some fifteen or twenty thousand men. Our General will, I think, try to strike a blow on one of these columns before retreating on Manassas Gap, where Beauregard has, or may soon concentrate, a force of some eight or ten thousand men.

“Generals McDowell and Mansfield are in front of him with some thirty thousand men. If, after driving back one of the columns advancing from the west, we can unite with Beauregard, we may fall upon the Alexandria force, drive it across the Potomac and then return upon McClellan. Our men cannot march, un-

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fortunately. We have no means of transportation; and are but poorly prepared for rapid movements and operations in the field."

"Winchester, Va., June 24th, 1861.

"I have been so occupied, day and night, since my arrival in Winchester that I have really had no time to write to you. Our position in Harper's Ferry, untenable and unimportant from a military point of view, was only held in compliance with instructions from an Aulic Council in Richmond, whose faults and blunders had nearly involved us in irreparable losses. On the arrival of the President in Virginia, General Johnston was instructed that he could evacuate Harper's Ferry and must be governed in his movements by circumstances, implicit reliance being placed upon his military experience and ability.

"We evacuated Harper's Ferry, destroying bridges, railroad and public buildings, and moved out toward Winchester. Winchester, about forty miles from the Potomac, is the commercial centre of this neighborhood towards which all the main roads and turnpikes trend, and it is the strategic point of all operations, offensive and defensive, in the valley of Virginia.

"The position at Harper's Ferry could have been turned either to the north or south; and its army, enclosed in a *cul de sac* between impassable mountain ridges, compelled to surrender at discretion.

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“Our forces moved out a few miles from the Ferry and encamped for the purpose of observing the following day (Sunday) as a day of fasting and humiliation, when news came that General Patterson had crossed the Potomac at Williamsport, thirty miles above Harper’s Ferry. By a rapid move across the country to the Winchester and Williamsport Turnpike, we came near striking a decisive blow upon Patterson’s column. We had a distance of forty miles to march. The enemy barely recrossed the Potomac in time. A few stragglers were taken. Their main force is now at Chambersburg, twenty miles from the river, and is composed of Pennsylvania volunteers, about 8,000 strong. Their best troops, including all the regulars, have gone to Washington where a large force is concentrating for an attack on Beauregard. My old regiment (Second Cavalry) has been opposite me, commanded by General Thomas, an ex-Major of the regiment, a Virginia renegade. Colonel Fitz John Porter and Stone, my classmates at West Point, are with the invading column. Henry Whiting, Chief Engineer, General Bee, and Major Howard, classmates and loved friends, are here. Bee has just been appointed General in the Provisional Army. Howard is on his staff. My position is Adjutant-General of the army under General Johnston, and as he is the senior of all the Generals appointed in the Confederate service, and the most experienced and able,

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my place is one of great importance and consideration. The duties are onerous and burdensome, it is true. Our men and officers are unacquainted with their duties, have volunteered in the service of their country, and have made sacrifices which doubles my patience and forbearance with their ignorance and mistakes.

“Our force now numbers some 10,000 effective men — well men, I should say — for they are badly equipped and ill-clothed. We have from fourteen to eighteen hundred sick, and the measles is daily adding to the sick report. As we have to campaign without baggage or tents, the exposure in this mountain region is great. Even my Texas experience has not secured me against colds, etc. Speaking of baggage, I have long since dropped trunks, clothes, shirts, etc. My wardrobe is carried on my back. Two colored shirts, a change of underclothes and two blankets make up the sum total of my personal effects. Aleck and three horses complete the list.

“As the Adjutant-General, and (with Henry Whiting) the only experienced officer for a long time with the army, we were kept occupied day and night. Whiting and myself take turns in sitting up at night, visiting the brigades, posting and inspecting regiments and guards, and making reconnoissances, etc.

“The present move on the part of the enemy indicates a speedy attack on Beauregard’s position. They

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are massing troops in and about Washington. Every effort has been made on our part to raise Beauregard's force to the largest number possible. He must have some 20,000 men under his control, amongst which are seven South Carolina regiments. Our commands, though forty miles apart, are in communication and ready to co-operate with each other. McClellan has not yet made his appearance from the West. Our detachments report the Baltimore and Ohio Road as unoccupied by them east of Grafton. Several skirmishes have taken place, but no engagement of importance."

"Camp near Martinsburg, July 4th, 1861.

"We are drawn up in position opposite Patterson's force, and yesterday confidently expected a general engagement. Patterson's army, from all accounts, numbers some 15,000, and occupies the town of Martinsburg, a very strong position on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, six miles beyond us.

"We have offered battle with a much inferior force; our men are eager for the contest, but, from appearances, there is no prospect for engaging the enemy except on his terms.

"You have undoubtedly heard of my promotion. I received in Winchester my appointment as Brigadier-General from Mr. Davis. Barny Bee, my classmate, and I are the two general officers with the army under

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General Johnston. If the battle we expected had taken place yesterday, I would have gone into action at the head of one wing of the Army, made up of two brigades, one commanded by Colonel Bartow, of Georgia, and one by Colonel Elzy, of the old army. Archy Cole arrived here this morning. As he is an old acquaintance of General Johnston and Major Whiting, he will remain as a volunteer aid on the General's staff."

At the same time as the above last quoted letter, the General wrote to Colonel Clay, giving somewhat fuller details of the situation, as follows:

"Camp near Darksville, July 4th, 1861.

"We are drawn up in position within hearing of Patterson's army, the booming of whose guns has been ringing the national salute into our ears. Powder is too scarce a commodity to waste in such festivities, but our bands have played 'Dixie' from one end of the line to the other.

"Our men are in fine spirits and anxious for the affray; but Patterson, though vastly our superior numerically and in artillery, will not dare advance. ✓ He occupies a very strong position at Martinsburg, on the Baltimore and Ohio Road. On the 2nd, Jackson's Brigade, in advance of Martinsburg, was advanced upon Patterson's force. One regiment

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alone, Colonel Harper's, sustained the attack of five regiments, falling back slowly and in good order; as Jackson said, with all the coolness and regularity of regulars. Two men killed, ten missing and thirteen wounded were the casualties on our side. We captured forty-seven prisoners, two officers and some ammunition wagons. A good many wounded were carried off the field. Their loss in killed and wounded must have been much greater than ours. This was extremely creditable, as Jackson had no supporting force nearer than Winchester and had the bulk of Patterson's force opposed to him. Stewart, Colonel of the Cavalry regiment, an active, dashing and untiring partisan, passed to their rear, captured some ammunition wagons, killing and taking several prisoners. A part of his command rode up to the fence by the side of the turnpike where a company of Pennsylvania troops were drawn up, and in a loud voice ordered them to pull the fence down; they were Federal cavalry and would pass to the front. When the Pennsylvanians had removed the fence, the whole company was captured to a man before any resistance could be made.

“My dear Clay, I have received an appointment as Brigadier-General and am at present commanding a wing of the army until a brigade is permanently assigned me. Could you not apply to be attached to my staff as Adjutant-General? The only difficulty is, you

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have too much rank, but if you do not go into the field with an older and more experienced command, and will renew our former official relations, I will indeed be gratified by having you with me. Write and let me know what action you may take in the matter."

General Johnston, upon deciding that Harper's Ferry was untenable, withdrew his troops, as we have seen from the above letters, to Winchester, intending to effect a union of his forces with those of Beauregard, then encamped upon the plains of Manassas. On the 18th of July, 1861, he received a dispatch from Richmond stating that the Federal Army under General Irwin McDowell was advancing upon Manassas; and acting upon the discretionary power given him, Johnston advanced to the assistance of Beauregard. The following day the whole army of Johnston, except a portion under the command of General Kirby-Smith, moved through Ashby's Gap to Piedmont, a station on the Manassas Gap Railroad. Thence the infantry proceeded by train, the cavalry continuing the march by road, and reached Manassas by noon on the 20th.

In the meantime McDowell had thrown his right around Beauregard's left, turned his position, attacked him at daylight on the 21st, and the battle of Manassas or Bull Run was begun. Driving everything before him as he marched down the right bank of Bull

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Run, McDowell had the Confederates in retreat by midday, their line broken and their position forced. About that time General Kirby-Smith arrived by train from Winchester, with the Fourth Brigade under Colonel Elzey, at the junction of the Manassas Gap and Orange and Alexandria Railroads. The General heard the noise of battle, stopped the train and hurriedly debarked his men. The brigade was then composed of the First Maryland, the Third Tennessee, and the Tenth and Thirteenth Regiments of the Provisional Army. When formed, the General assumed command and hurried forward to where the battle was hottest. Wounded men were met retreating, who cried: "Go back! We are all cut to pieces. Go back! You will all get killed." But the brigade kept steadily on and General Kirby-Smith reported to General Johnston. But as he proceeded past a clump of pines on the right, a sharp volley from a squad of the Brooklyn Zouaves knocked him over the neck of his horse, struck by a ball and severely wounded; indeed, it was at first supposed that he was killed, and Colonel Elzey resumed the command and admirably accomplished "with great promptitude and vigor" the movement so effectual in defeating the Federal Army, and turning Confederate defeat into victory.

Without entering into the controversy that has been repeatedly waged over the question, "Who was the

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‘Blucher of Manassas’?’ always with the same result—the complete vindication of General Kirby-Smith’s claim to that title—the account which follows is for the most part in General Kirby-Smith’s own words, and his statements have been abundantly verified by evidence adduced from a variety of sources:

“I came upon the field at Manassas,” wrote the General, “with Elzey’s Brigade, which formed a part of the division assigned to my command by General Johnston. When the head of our column, on the march from Winchester, reached the Manassas Gap Railroad, General Johnston pushed on with the advanced brigades by rail, leaving me, as the second in command and his chief of staff, to embark and forward on their arrival, as rapidly as possible, the remaining brigades. I reached the battlefield in rear of our left flank, through crowds of fugitives, who in many cases had thrown away their arms and were hurrying away from the field, declaring we were whipped. Without halting the column, I rode rapidly forward and in person reported to General Johnston, who ordered me to halt in the rear. Urging the eagerness and enthusiasm of my men, I begged the General to let me take them to the front. His reply was ‘The ground is new to me. It is our left that is driven back. You may move your men forward to its support.’

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“Returning at a gallop, and taking the firing as a guide, I led the column at a double-quick, endeavoring to bring it upon the right flank of the enemy. I was shot as the brigade deployed into line, and was taken in an unconscious condition to the rear. The stampede which took place in the Union army occurred within fifteen minutes after I was shot — General Elzey taking command and leading the brigade into action. My belief is that the appearance of my command upon the enemy’s right flank, together with that of some other troops which came up at that time to the support of our left, caused the panic which so suddenly changed a victory for the Union army into a disgraceful flight.”²

The course of events after the General fell wounded upon the battlefield at Manassas is best told in the letters he wrote to his mother as soon as he was able to resume his correspondence.

² As these pages are passing through the press, General E. P. Alexander’s “The Battle of Bull Run,” appears in a popular magazine, to be reprinted subsequently in his book of reminiscences. The statements of this writer are corroborative of the claims of the friends of General Kirby-Smith. “These were the only troops of Johnston’s army to arrive in time for the beginning of the battle, though another brigade under General Kirby-Smith arrived in time to turn the wavering scale about 3 P.M. on the 21st.”

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“Cunningham Manor, July 31st, 1861.

“I am located in the most delightful country residence of Mr. Ed Cunningham, about thirty miles from Manassas, near the Orange and Alexandria Railroad. Captain Cunningham of the Engineers, who was on my staff, insisted on bringing me here to the residence of his uncle, and my good star could not have placed me in kinder, better hands. Mr. Cunningham and his wife are both well advanced in life and without children. Their home is one of those country residences for which Virginia is so noted, where the hospitality meted out to all, is as genuine as it is bountiful and unostentatious. Mr. Cunningham and family are Episcopalians, and there is an air of true Christian piety pervading the whole household which will conduce as much to my spiritual as to my bodily good.

“I have had another of my providential escapes. The ball (a large minie) entered just back of the collar bone on the right shoulder, passed under the muscles of the shoulder blade and the muscles of the spine, missing the artery and the spine, and coming out at the left shoulder; and after leaving a track of twelve inches through the very region of vitality, has, I may say almost miraculously, inflicted no more than a flesh wound, which though painful and troublesome, never was dangerous, and will keep me but a short time from the field.

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“I was shot almost immediately after coming into action. Our force, of which I was second in command, left Winchester to effect a junction with Beauregard. After marching day and night, at eleven o'clock in the morning, we reached Piedmont on the Manassas road, thirty miles from the Junction (Beauregard's position). General Johnston moved with the advance, consisting of Jackson's Brigade and a portion of Bee's and Bartow's Brigades, leaving me at Piedmont with 7,000 men, a little more than half the column.

“I pushed on with the next train in the morning and reached the battlefield, some five miles from the road, about 2 p. m., in time to retrieve the fortunes of the day. For one hour my command moved through crowds of fugitives of every arm and apparently from every regiment and State. Threats and entreaties were alike vain. Fear and exhaustion had entirely demoralized them. Finding that even the sabre was ineffectual in rallying them, we pushed forward, regardless of their discouraging influence, with the resolve to die if all hope were gone. Two South Carolina regiments opportunely came on to the field at the same time, Cash's and Kershaw's, and by the Providence of God, a defeat on our part was converted into a panic and rout on the side of the enemy.

“We should indeed, give thanks to the Almighty, to Whom all praise is due. The battle was not won

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by force of arms, but God in His mercy spread a panic through their hosts and turned them in dismay and with confusion at the very moment of their victory. Their reserves were not even brought into action and many of their regiments had not even fired a shot.

“My friends everywhere overwhelm me with kindness. Mr. McDaniel, President of the Farmers’ Bank, Lynchburg, sent his nephew to the battlefield to hunt me up, dead or alive; if dead, to bring my body; if alive, to remain by my side till I could be transported to his home at Lynchburg.”

“Lynchburg, Va., August 16th, 1861.

“I arrived here yesterday, from Mr. Cunningham’s residence in Culpepper. My wound, though not entirely closed, is so nearly healed that I expect to report for duty in the field by the first of September. If I have cause to be thankful for my providential escape, I am equally so for my rapid and easy recovery. With a wound some eleven inches in extent through my shoulder and back, I have suffered no pain, had no fever, and on the eleventh day mounted my horse and rode some two miles without ill consequences. I am now here at my friend’s, Mr. McDaniel’s, where I shall remain until I report for duty at Manassas. In the meantime I am led to believe that no movement will be made on either side and that I shall reach the army before my services will be needed. . . .

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“I wrote you some days after my arrival at Mr. Cunningham’s, where I was carried the second day after the battle. I felt much concern at my death having been published in the papers, and read my obituary with but little satisfaction. . . . My friends here in Lynchburg were equally concerned. Mr. McDaniel sent his nephew to the field to hunt me up and bring me to his house. . . . I received a letter from Josie with one from Bishop DeLancy [Bishop of Western New York], both addressed to McDowell, anxiously inquiring for me. They were endorsed, ‘answered by McDowell,’ and were forwarded to General Johnston’s headquarters. It behooves one to be killed occasionally to find out how many friends he has and how anxiously he can be inquired after. I was fortunate in having Captain Cunningham on my staff and in being taken to his uncle’s residence. Surrounded with every comfort and luxury, with careful, attentive nursing, in a beautiful locality, with the quiet of the country and the influences of a truly pious and religious family, my recovery was greatly accelerated.”

“Lynchburg, Va., September 4th, 1861.

“I am still here at McDaniel’s with my friend Clay, but my wound has so far healed that I intend to leave tomorrow for Richmond preparatory to joining my command. We are here hourly looking for impor-

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tant news. In every direction — Western Virginia, Missouri and the Potomac — a fierce struggle with our foes is inevitable. Around Manassas, though our pickets and outposts are constantly engaged, there is no evidence of a forward movement. Indeed, my advices from Richmond tell me that no movement is contemplated for at least three weeks. You must feel no uneasiness about my wound, and though my shoulder is somewhat refractory, I will not experience any permanent ill effects. . . .

“James Smith’s son Edward was at Manassas in the Seventy-first New York Regiment; but, like the rest of the three months’ men, he returned home convinced that a pleasure trip to Richmond was not advisable at this season. Ned Kirby was in Ricketts’ Battery, directly opposed to me. At the time, I believed it was a grape shot from his battery that struck me down. The doctor relieved me by assuring me that the wound was made by a minie ball. I shall remain in Richmond but a few hours, transact such business as I can and return here for my trunk before reporting at Manassas. One Florida regiment has applied to be attached to my brigade. I think it will be done. They are spoken of as a fine body of men.”

It was while convalescing at the home of Colonel McDaniel at Lynchburg, that General Kirby-Smith met Miss Cassie, daughter of Samuel S. Selden,

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deceased, late of Lynchburg, to whom he was married on the 24th of September, 1861. With his bride he made a visit to St. Augustine, and then, upon the expiration of his leave of absence, returned to Virginia. Resuming his correspondence with his mother, his letters furnish further details of his movements up to the beginning of the year 1862.

“Lynchburg, Va., October 22nd, 1861.

“On my arrival here I found a telegram calling me to Richmond and informing me that I had been ordered to the command of the Department of Florida. In Richmond, however, I met with every kindness and consideration from the President and Secretary of War, Mr. Benjamin. The former told me I had been ordered to Florida under the impression that it would be acceptable and gratifying to me, but that they could ill dispense with my services on the Potomac. Mr. Benjamin said he was glad my orders had missed me, as the new disposition of the troops on the Potomac required my presence there.

“I should indeed feel gratified at the honors conferred upon me. The President has promoted me to a Major-General, and given me command of one of the divisions on the Potomac. By the present disposition of the forces which goes into effect in a few days, the Army of the Potomac will be divided into four divisions of five brigades each, the division command-

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ers being G. W. Smith, Van Dorn, Longstreet and myself; all under the immediate command of Beauregard. Johnston remains in command in Northern Virginia, his jurisdiction comprising the District of the Valley (the country west of the Blue Ridge), under T. J. Jackson; the District of the Potomac, under Beauregard; and the District of Aquia Creek and Fredericksburg, under Holmes.

"The brigades under my command will be composed of all the Georgia and Texas troops under Generals Walker, Toombs, Wigfall, Evans, and Elzey. I feel impressed with the vast responsibility now resting upon my shoulders. My trust rests alone on that Providence which has so successfully guided and guarded me through a life of dangers and responsibilities. I will pray for strength and wisdom from on high, that God will enable me to sustain the hopes of my friends and the expectations of my country."

"Headquarters, Centreville, Va.,
November 2nd, 1861.

"I arrived here Monday, having been detained some days in Richmond awaiting final instructions. I have my tent pitched in the outskirts of the little village of Centreville, in a field with Generals Johnston and G. W. Smith and their staffs. My command has not yet been assigned to me in orders, but I will have the brigade on the left wing of the army, com-

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posed of Alabamians, Georgians and Mississippians. My staff has not yet been organized, but my friend Clay has been ordered to report to me as Adjutant-General, and Captain Cunningham will be one of my aids. I feel the vast responsibility now thrown upon my shoulders; twenty-five regiments, the command of a Field Marshal, is a large body of men to be wielded and manœuvered by one man. It is indeed a vast responsibility, with annoyances, anxieties and distresses both of mind and body difficult to be appreciated.

“I feel that on this army hangs the fate of the country. If we defeat the enemy here, whatever be their successes elsewhere they will be thrown away. Baltimore will be occupied. Maryland will rise and in all probability the Administration will be overthrown. Should we be routed, however (which God forbid), the consequences are too awful for contemplation.

“All is quiet here, yet from the movement of troops in heavy masses on the other side, it would seem that some important operation is on hand: a demonstration towards Holmes’ command in the Fredericksburg District, whilst McClellan attacks in force on our centre here or endeavors to turn our left. He brings tremendous odds against us with great preponderance of artillery. We meet him with firm, brave hearts, a just cause and a reliance upon that Provi-

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dence Who has thus far plainly manifested Himself in all our successes. . . .

“The battle of this campaign will, I believe, be fought here in November. The sooner the better for us, as we have no provision for winter, and our men are ill-provided with all the necessities and but little accustomed to the exposures of a rigorous winter. The weather is already cold; ice and heavy frost in the morning. While I am writing a violent storm rages. Most of our tents have been blown down.”

“Centreville, November 23rd, 1861.

“We still have no evidences of an advance on the part of the enemy and the feeling is daily gaining ground that nothing will be done here this winter. General Toombs tells me that he has just received a letter from a New York friend, who states that he has just seen a letter from McClellan saying that this army is the Rebellion — it is Secession. He gives the exact force of the army and names of the Generals in command, and says that it is folly to suppose the army can be crushed out. If he can dissipate it and scatter it, the Rebellion can be crushed.

“I have no one with me on my staff at present but my valued aid and esteemed friend Clay. He is my Adjutant-General, and Captain Morgan is my Chief Quartermaster. Captain Cunningham, my aid, is absent, sick. I have applied for the appointment of

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Winfield as my second aid, and I am expecting him every day. He is with the Hampton Legion at Dumfries, on the Potomac. A few days since I rode over the battlefield of the 21st. But few indications remain to tell of the desperate struggle that raged on that day. Skeletons of dead horses and the half-exhumed remains of the enemy's dead mark the ground. I gathered a sprig of cedar from the tree by the side of which I fell, and one from the bush where poor Bee received his mortal wound."

"Wilcoxon House, January 19th, 1861.

"Since I last wrote, several pleasant and, to me, important changes have taken place in both my domestic and military arrangements. My division, comprising as you know, Taylor's, Elzey's, and Trimble's Brigades, has moved back some six miles to the rear of Centreville, and the men have been busily engaged since Christmas in hutting themselves for the winter. I occupy the country on both sides of the railroad for two miles to the north and east of Manassas Junction; and notwithstanding the paucity of tools, the poverty of the Government, and inefficiency of the Quartermaster's Department, have succeeded in putting my command in comfortable log cabins where they can worry through the winter — if McClellan will only let them. My headquarters have been established at a pretty little farm house known as Wilcoxon's. It

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is an old, ante-Revolutionary affair, and was the estate of the Hooes of Alexandria in the palmy days of Fairfax County. It is a long, low, rambling, old-fashioned building with six rooms and outhouses. Cassie and her sister are with me, and with a little taste and some good furniture we have rejuvenated the old edifice.

“Notwithstanding the absence of fences and the marks of devastation which follow in the track of the contending armies in our immediate vicinity, war has lost its horrors and the benign influence of crinoline has shed an air of peace and quietude over us to which we have long been strangers. In truth, we are delightfully situated; with warm, pleasant rooms well furnished, and a larder that would do credit to any market. We get oysters from Richmond; the coop seems always full of turkeys and chickens; a fine haunch of venison or a quarter of mutton comes in every few days with the compliments of some friend; fine beef and vegetables are in abundance with eggs, fresh butter and rich cream. Van Dorn and Taylor are near neighbors. Van Dorn has his sister with him, Mrs. Sullivan. She only a few days since arrived from Baltimore. Fitz Lee, Jenifer and many of my old Texas friends and companions are here. Generals Johnston, Beauregard, and G. W. Smith are to move to this neighborhood for the winter, and should the campaign be suspended, there will be no lack of

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society, as they have all been making arrangements for their families this winter.

“Our present status, however, is extremely uncertain. We are even now prepared to move at a moment’s notice, and have been for days under marching orders; our information from every source indicates a projected campaign this winter on the part of the Northern army. They are supposed only to be waiting for the Burnside expedition to be fully fitted out. One portion, seventy vessels, is now at Hampton Roads. The remainder is to come from the North. From the character of their vessels we believe this expedition will not go south, but is intended to co-operate with McClellan’s army in an attack on the lower Potomac.

“Evansport will probably be attacked and the blockade of the Potomac raised; they will then probably shift their base of operations to the Rappahannock or the vicinity of Fredericksburg, thus cutting off our communications with Richmond and completely turning our present position. Four or five days will in all probability decide the character of the campaign. . . .

“The weather has been cold and our men have suffered from pneumonia. My old friend Colonel Smith is not expected to live. I saw him with his wife two evenings since at Van Dorn’s quarters. An hour after leaving he was delirious with an attack of typhoid

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pneumonia. Should you wish to write to anyone North, I can send your letters. I have not written myself, and shall not to anyone north of the Potomac, but will send any letter enclosed under cover to me."

CHAPTER XI

THE KENTUCKY CAMPAIGN

Late in February, 1862, Major-General Kirby-Smith was relieved from duty with the Army of the Potomac and assigned to the command of the Department of East Tennessee, North Georgia and North-west Carolina, comprising the mountain region of which the valley of East Tennessee is the centre. He arrived the following month at Knoxville, the headquarters of the Department, and at once, in accordance with instructions from President Davis, proclaimed martial law. The law was especially stringent as regards the sale of spirituous liquors. His part in the events which followed cannot be better related than in his own words:

“The mountain section to which I was assigned in 1862, was filled with a large Union element, which in East Tennessee was pronounced and bitter in feeling, with animosities intensified by an injudicious and probably unnecessarily severe treatment on the part of the Confederate leaders. The old party lines of Whig and Democrat, I found, were to a marked degree in accord with the division into Union and Confederates; and immediately upon my arrival at

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Knoxville, the headquarters of the Department, strong pressure was brought to bear, to urge me to adopt severe and stringent measures in dealing with the Union element, especially with the leading and prominent men who remained in East Tennessee. But with that sense of justice and regard for law, by which I faithfully endeavored to direct every act of administration during the war, I determined to deal kindly, yet firmly, with the Union element, and if possible, to win it over to the side where it rightly belonged. I announced in general orders that I would protect every man in his rights under the law without bias from his Union or Confederate proclivities, and that I would punish under the articles of war, any intercourse with the enemy by those remaining within our lines and living under our protection.

“Severe repressive measures were taken with the loose cavalry organizations which had forced into existence and had developed much of the bitterness and opposition toward the Confederacy then characterizing the mountain region. Some of them were broken up and scattered through other commands. Others were brigaded and brought under strict discipline, and in a very short time a marked change was noticeable throughout the Department. Sentiments disloyal to the Confederate Government were no longer openly proclaimed. A kindlier feeling and a more friendly spirit toward the Confederacy developed

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itself throughout the mountain region, and before many months more than one regiment was raised and mustered into the Confederate Army from that very element which had been previously so violently in opposition to our cause.

“The strategic importance of East Tennessee forced itself upon my convictions from the start. It provided the line of communication between the East and West of the Confederacy (the gateway through Chattanooga to the south by which Sherman afterwards marched); and had its strong natural boundary projecting, like a great bastion upon, and threatening Buell’s communications in North Mississippi, while his base was in Kentucky. Rich in resources, the region was largely sending supplies to the support of the Confederate army near Tupelo. I wrote to General Bragg and urged the shifting of his base from Mississippi to East Tennessee; that rapidly transporting his army over the railroad and reënforced by my command, he could throw himself upon Buell’s communications, strike him to great advantage and with almost certainty of success. His base in East Tennessee, rich in supplies and fortified by nature, strengthened and secured his rear. Bragg replied that he would move and requested the sending of my cavalry into middle Tennessee and Kentucky, and the destruction of the railroad leading from Louisville. In compliance with this request, John H. Morgan

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was sent by me into Kentucky, and the Louisville and Nashville Railroad was broken up.

“Bragg did not move, and it was only after the occupation of Cumberland Gap by the Federal General George W. Morgan, and the threatening of Chattanooga from Buell’s command, that Bragg’s change of base was ordered and the Army of the Mississippi moved to East Tennessee.

“On taking command of the Department of East Tennessee, I found, for the defence of the Department a Confederate force of about 5,000, ill-organized and lacking discipline. The loose companies and scattered cavalry were at once brigaded and a concentration was made at Chattanooga and Cumberland Gap, the two most strategic points. General Stevenson, a most excellent officer, was placed in command at the Gap, and General Leadbetter at Chattanooga. Toward the latter part of June, a column of some 10,000 Federals under General George W. Morgan, moved upon Cumberland Gap by the mountains of Kentucky, while a second column under General Mitchell, from Middle Tennessee, after defeating Adams’ Cavalry, threatened Chattanooga. Cumberland Gap was turned by the Big Creek Gap, and General Stevenson, to avoid being invested, evacuated Cumberland Gap; and on the 20th of June, fell back to the line of the Clinch River, before that position, which was at once occupied by the Federal General Morgan. And Mitchell,

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whose move proved to be only a diversion in favor of Morgan, after throwing a few shells into Chattanooga from the opposite shore of the Tennessee, rapidly fell back. Reënforcements were rapidly thrown into East Tennessee, and on the 14th of June, the forces in the Department were disposed as follows: General Stevenson's Division, 10,000 strong and composed of four brigades of infantry and one of cavalry, occupied the line of the Clinch. General Heth's Division, of three brigades of infantry, and General McGown's Division of two brigades of infantry, with a brigade of cavalry, 10,000 strong, occupied the line of the Tennessee between Chattanooga and Bridgeport. General John H. Morgan, with 1,300 cavalry, was operating in Kentucky.

“On the 21st of July, the army of Mississippi was ordered to move from Tupelo on Chattanooga. On the 31st of July, I met General Bragg in Chattanooga and passed a large part of the night in discussing with him the plans of the campaign. I reminded him that the condition of my department was much changed since I first urged the shifting of his base from Tupelo to East Tennessee; that General George W. Morgan now occupied Cumberland Gap with a force of over 9,000 (he reports 11,000) men; that the fortifications were much strengthened, and the place made secure against assault. General Bragg proposed operating in Middle Tennessee with Nashville for his

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objective point; and that, reënforced by Cleburne's Division, composed of Smith's and Churchill's Brigades, I should take Cumberland Gap by assault. We separated and I returned to Knoxville and hastened the preparations for carrying out my part of the campaign.

"On the 9th of August, I wrote to General Bragg from Knoxville that the true and most effective mode of investing Cumberland Gap would be a direct move on Lexington, Kentucky, and the occupation of the Blue Grass region, from which his supplies were drawn. And on the 11th of August I wrote to President Davis from Knoxville, that leaving General Stevenson with 9,000 men in front of General Morgan, I should move into Kentucky with 10,000 men and invest Cumberland Gap by occupying the Blue Grass country from which all the enemy's supplies were drawn. 'My advance is made,' I wrote, 'in the hope of permanently occupying Kentucky. It is a bold move, offering brilliant results, and will be accomplished only by hard fighting.'

"On the night of the 16th of August, moving for the investment of Cumberland Gap, the passage of the mountains was begun. At the head of Cleburne's and Churchill's Divisions, 6,000 strong, I crossed by Rogers' Gap; and Heth, with his Division of Davis' and Leadbetter's Brigades, 3,000 strong, crossed by Big Creek Gap. Scott's Brigade of cavalry, 900 men,

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with a battery of mountain howitzers, moved in advance and occupied Barboursville, on the 18th of August. I arrived in Barboursville two days later and received a dispatch from General Bragg that he would begin his movement upon the rear of Nashville that week.

“The almost impassable nature of the roads across the mountains, their length and openness to attack from the garrison at Cumberland Gap, convinced me long before reaching Barboursville that the move into Kentucky was the only feasible mode of investing the Gap. On the day I reached Barboursville I dispatched Humphrey Marshall, in West Virginia, as follows: ‘I shall move with my column rapidly upon Lexington, Kentucky, via Richmond, on the 25th. Move forward rapidly into Morgan County, Kentucky, and co-operate with me.’

“On the 21st I wrote to President Davis: ‘I have but one of two things to do, either to fall back to East Tennessee for supplies, or to advance upon Lexington for them. The latter course, though a bold one, I have most unhesitatingly determined to take.’ I predicted in my letter that my advance with a column of nearly 10,000 men into Kentucky would be attended with most brilliant results. John H. Morgan had despatched me that he had destroyed the tunnel upon the Louisville and Nashville Railroad; that Bragg’s move upon the rear of Nashville left me nothing to

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fear from Buell, and I should have opposed to me only raw levies then being raised in the Northwest.

“Measures were taken at once for the advance. Scott was ordered forward to cover the movement. Stevenson’s Division of Rains’, Barton’s, Reynolds’ and Taylor’s Brigades and Ashby’s Cavalry Brigade—in all 10,000—was in front of the Gap. Reynolds’ Brigade was detached and ordered to join General Heth at Barboursville. General Leadbetter occupied Cumberland Ford. On the 23rd, Scott attacked and defeated Metcalf’s cavalry and Garratt’s infantry at Big Hill, and thus the appearance was given of no more than a cavalry raid into Kentucky.

“Scott reporting the enemy strong on his front, on the morning of the 27th, leaving Heth at Barboursville under orders to follow as rapidly as possible, I moved by forced marches with Cleburne’s and Churchill’s Divisions to the support of Scott, through a wild mountain region and over wretched roads, and reached the top of Big Hill at daylight on the 29th. Our movement had been perfectly covered by Scott’s advance, and none of the mountain passes and strong positions were occupied by the enemy. We descended Big Hill and debouched from the mountains on the morning of the 29th; pushing forward late in the afternoon, we skirmished heavily with the enemy’s cavalry; and that night, our men, exhausted with long and rapid marches, rested on their arms in order

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of battle, so close to the enemy's position that his pickets, to their surprise, were captured next morning within our lines.

"We had now advanced a hundred miles into Kentucky, through a wild and difficult mountain region almost destitute of supplies. The Blue Grass country lay before us, an inviting spectacle to our tired and hungry men. Before us, there was plenty; behind, certain starvation. The enemy on our front, commanded by General Maunson, was about 8,000 strong. Our effective force, including Cleburne's and Churchill's Divisions, and Scott's cavalry, was less than 6,000.

"Our movement had been so completely covered and so rapidly executed that the enemy, ignorant of our numbers or purposes, were taken by surprise; and had they known we were the head of a strong column, moving to occupy the country, and not a raiding force as they believed, instead of meeting us in the open country in front of Richmond, Kentucky, they would have opposed us in the passes and strong positions of the Cumberland Mountains, or would have posted themselves along the high bluffs and precipices of the Kentucky River, where they could have successfully resisted the passage of even a greatly superior force.

"The order was given to attack at daylight. The 3rd of August dawned bright, clear and beautiful. The enemy occupied both sides of the Richmond pike,

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with his artillery in the centre. Cleburne's Division was formed on the right of the pike, with his artillery on his left. Churchill, with one brigade of his Division, was directed to move by his left under cover of ravines, concealed from the enemy and debouching on his left and rear to cut off his retreat from Richmond. The other brigade was held in reserve and Martin's Florida Battery was directed to take position on a rising ground to the front and left of the pike. Cleburne, apprised of Churchill's movement, was ordered to hold the enemy in check, until it was fully developed. The infantry fire became severe, and the enemy, advancing in line, attempted to turn our right. Cleburne was wounded early in the action and was taken to the rear, but Preston Smith skillfully foiled the movement by a charge of his whole division, which broke the enemy, driving him from the field in confusion. Churchill reached his position in time to pour a volley upon the retreating column, but not in time to intercept their retreat. This was the combat of Mount Zion of the Battle of Richmond. A few prisoners and some ambulance and ammunition wagons fell into our hands. We lost several gallant officers and a number of men.

"The loss of the enemy was much heavier, and though beaten and driven from the field, he received reënforcements, rallied within a mile and renewed the fight with rifled artillery. At one o'clock our

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entire line advanced. The firing was heavy and the skirmishers were rapidly driven in. The main force of the enemy was massed in front of Churchill and concealed from view. Rising, they delivered a volley at short range. Our line wavered, but Churchill's voice rang out above the roar, steadying his men and ordering a charge. The enemy was broken, almost at the point of the bayonet. The Federals were again driven from the field, one gun and several hundred prisoners taken. But not yet beaten, they rallied under the cover of the stone walls in front of Richmond. Thus ended the combat of Wheat's Farm.

"It was now three o'clock. Our men had been marching and fighting since daylight, without water. A halt was ordered and the command was given a rest. Certain of victory in the final encounter, Scott was ordered to move rapidly with his whole cavalry force and to occupy the roads leading out of Richmond toward Lexington. He was told that within thirty minutes from the opening of the battle the enemy would be in full retreat, and that he would be held responsible for the capture of the entire force.

"At five o'clock we moved forward and found the enemy strongly posted in the outskirts of Richmond on a line covered by stone fences running along the crest of the hill through the cemetery. They had been strongly reënforced, and Major-General Nelson, commanding the Department, had arrived and taken

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command. Their force was over 10,000, of which 2,500 were veterans and the remainder newly organized commands from the camps of instruction.

“McKney’s Texas Brigade was ordered to turn their right, while Preston Smith advanced steadily on their left and centre. The fighting was vigorous and the loss heavy on both sides. McKney succeeded in flanking, and Preston Smith with a dashing charge under a murderous fire, captured the cemetery. A charge was now ordered along the entire line and the enemy were pressed through the town. They made a feeble attempt to rally, but a few shells completed the confusion and they were driven along the Lexington pike, cavalry, infantry, artillery and wagons, a confused mob of fugitives.

“The sun was setting; our troops had driven the enemy over ten miles of broken country and had fought the whole day; our reserves had all been called into action and our men, exhausted and broken down, were unable to pursue, and the enemy was left to be dealt with by Scott’s cavalry. That officer masked a battery on the Lexington pike to sweep that road and concealed his men on either side. The poor, discomfited fugitives rushed pell-mell into the ambushade. The havoc was frightful. They threw down their arms and surrendered in crowds. But few escaped. General Mauson was captured here. General Nelson was taken also, but escaped in the confusion and dark-

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ness, and hid himself in a field of corn. In fact, we had no adequate guard for the prisoners, and some thousands walked away in the night. The next day about 6,000 were paroled.

“Thus ended the Battle of Richmond, a complete victory. The enemy, by General Mauson’s statement, numbered over 10,000; our force, including Scott’s cavalry, was about 6,000. We lost in killed and wounded under 500, the enemy over 1,000. All their trains and artillery fell into our hands, and as the fruit of our victory, all Kentucky to the Ohio was at our feet. We entered Lexington on the 2nd of September. This, with the possession of the Blue Grass region, was the objective point of the campaign.

“Immediately after the Battle of Richmond, Bragg was despatched and urged to move into Kentucky and, effecting a junction with my command and holding Buell’s communications, to give battle to him with superior forces and with certainty of success. General Heth had now joined me with reënforcements. General John H. Morgan reached Lexington the day after my arrival, having destroyed the tunnel on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad and rendered that road useless to the enemy as a means of communication. My force was now fully 11,000 men, exclusive of Scott’s and Morgan’s cavalry, some 2,000 strong. Humphrey Marshall was entering Kentucky from

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West Virginia by Pound Gap, with a column of about 6,000.

“I had moved into Kentucky on my own responsibility as the only feasible mode of investing Cumberland Gap. Its occupation implied the evacuation of the Gap and the throwing out of General G. W. Morgan from the campaign, if not the capture of his entire force. Upon entering the State, I had issued the following address to the citizens:

“‘Kentuckians — The Army of the Confederate States has again entered your territory under my command. Let no one make you believe that we come as invaders, to coerce your will or to exercise control over your soil. Far from it. The principle we maintain is, that government derives its just power from the consent of the governed.

“‘I shall enforce the strictest discipline in order that the property of citizens and non-combatants may be protected. I shall be compelled to procure subsistence for my troops among you, and this shall be paid for.

“‘Kentuckians, we come not as invaders, but as liberators. We come in the spirit of your Resolutions of 1798. We come to arouse you from the lethargy which enshrouds your free thought, and forbodes the political death of your State. We come to test the truth of what we believe to be a foul aspersion, that Kentuckians willingly join the attempt to subjugate us and deprive us of our property, our liberty, and our dearest rights. We come to strike off the chains

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which are riveted upon you. We call upon you to unite your arms and join with us in hurling back from our fair and sunny plains the Northern hordes which would deprive us of our liberty that they may enjoy our substance.

“ ‘Are we deceived? Can you treat us as enemies? Our hearts answer, No!

(Signed)

“ ‘E. KIRBY SMITH,

“ ‘Major-General C. S. A.’ ”

“My purpose now was to hold my command in hand and, controlling the State to the Ohio, raise recruits, collect supplies and keep in readiness to join Bragg promptly on receipt of instructions to that effect. A small force (Cleburne's Division) was pushed towards Louisville, while Heth with the main column threatened Cincinnati. The occupation of Louisville might have endangered my concentration with Bragg and opened a line of retreat for the Federal General Morgan through Lexington. While our concentration, once effected, Buell's defeat was certain, and not only Louisville and Cincinnati, but the Northwest would be the points of victory. On the receipt of my dispatch announcing the victory at Richmond, General Bragg wrote that he would move at once into Kentucky. On the 13th of September, he reached Glasgow, Kentucky; and on the 17th, Mumfordsville, a fortified post on the line of Buell's communications, was surrendered with its garrison of 4,000 men.

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“Bragg was now in position to close the campaign with complete success. Up to this point his strategy was good, and had he called my command to his support, holding Buell’s line of communication and retreat upon Louisville, the latter’s destruction was certain. My instructions from General Bragg now were to hold my position and watch the Federal General Morgan. From this time all my movements were made under orders from General Bragg and in strict accordance with his instructions.

“My command was withdrawn from Covington and held in hand ready to co-operate with Bragg. Cleburne’s and Churchill’s Divisions remained in front of Louisville on the Shelbyville pike. John H. Morgan’s cavalry had been directed upon the rear of Cumberland Gap with instructions to hold the Federal force in check should it evacuate the Gap, while Stevenson was directed to push it vigorously in the rear. I received notification of the evacuation of Cumberland Gap on the 24th, too late to intercept General George W. Morgan, who, moving to the right by Manchester and West Liberty to the Little Sandy, escaped with the loss of some artillery and was thrown out of the campaign. Stevenson did not follow beyond Manchester.

“General Buell moved by Bowling Green upon Louisville. Bragg failed to attack at Cave City, and fell back towards Bardstown. Buell, having his imme-

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diate front uncovered, continued his movement upon Louisville and, with his entire flank exposed, passed unmolested immediately in front of Bragg. Buell was here in great peril and could have been successfully attacked.

“General Buell’s command reached Louisville on the 25th and 26th in safety, and was reënforced by some 40,000 troops concentrated at that point, mostly new levies.

“General Bragg, accompanied by General Buckner and Governor Hawes, arrived at Lexington on the 2nd of October, and on the morning of the 3rd, directed the concentration of my command at Frankfort for the inauguration of Governor Hawes, which he intended should take place the next day. A dispatch was received from Cleburne at Shelbyville that Buell was moving out from Louisville with his whole command upon three pikes, Shelbyville, Taylorsville and Bardstown. Reminding General Bragg of this dispatch, I urged his reconsideration of the order for my concentration at Frankfort, and begged him to give up the inauguration of Governor Hawes, and to concentrate at once our commands and give Buell battle; that the move on Frankfort was the dividing of his army and the massing of its two columns at Frankfort and Bardstown, over sixty miles apart, while Buell was marching out of Louisville with his command in hand and in position to strike each of our columns in detail.

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His reply was that he could crush Buell with his own command alone and that he should carry out his intention of inaugurating Governor Hawes at Frankfort. I then saw General Buckner and asked him to go at once to General Bragg and, as a Kentuckian, knowing the country, to lay the danger of our movement before General Bragg and urge the abandonment of the Frankfort concentration and inauguration. General Buckner informed me afterwards that he had done so, but could not change General Bragg from his purpose.

“Stevenson with 11,000, Heth from Georgetown with 7,000, and Humphrey Marshall with 5,000 moved on Frankfort, and on the 3rd of October, 23,000 good troops were concentrated at Frankfort. On the 4th, Cleburne, 5,000 strong, fell back from Shelbyville on Frankfort before Sill's Division. Sill's guns on the 4th, in front of Frankfort, closed the inauguration of Governor Hawes; and General Bragg, ordering the destruction of the bridge over the Kentucky River and the evacuation of Frankfort and the retreat of my column, hastened to his command at Bardstown. Withers' Division of Bragg's column was ordered to occupy Salvisa on the night of the 8th and arrest the march of Sill's column moving towards Perryville, while my command, by a night march, was to attack in the rear about daylight of the same night. Sill passed through Salvisa before Withers occupied that

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place, and effected his junction with Buell's main column. News of the battle of Perryville on the 8th of October reached me on the evening of the 9th, with orders to join Bragg at Harrodsburg. The head of my column by a night march entered Harrodsburg early on the morning of the 10th and I reported in person to General Bragg at that place. The rear of his column was moving out of Harrodsburg in retreat on Camp Dick Robertson as I entered. I reported my arrival at Harrodsburg, with 30,000 men, to General Bragg, and urged the countermarch of his column and the giving of battle to Buell at that place; that he had for the first time since his arrival in Kentucky concentrated his command, and that he could put nearly 60,000 veterans in line of battle. My words were: 'For God's sake, General, let us fight Buell here. I believe that without a command even, our men would run over Buell's army, composed as it is of more than half new levies.' General Bragg's reply was to me: 'I will do it, sir. Select your position, put your men in line of battle and I will counter-march my column.'

"I was occupied the whole morning in putting my command in line of battle amidst shouts and great enthusiasm, promising the men a fight on the morrow and a victory over the enemy. In the evening I received an order from Bragg directing me to take up my line and march on Camp Dick Robertson; that he

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had decided to retreat and not to fight Buell. I moved upon Camp Dick Robertson and the campaign ended most ingloriously, and for the first time in the history of the Confederacy, an army of veterans retreated before an inferior force largely made up of new levies. The concentration from the three Departments of West Virginia, East Tennessee and Mississippi was scattered to the four winds. Humphrey Marshall, by Pound Gap, was ordered back to West Virginia. The Army of East Tennessee, by Big Creek and Cumberland Gaps, to East Tennessee; and Bragg, posting in person to Richmond to lay his case before the President of the Confederate States, ordered the Army of the Mississippi back to Middle Tennessee."

In the Battle of Richmond, General Kirby-Smith won the admiration of his men, who declared that he was the "greatest General of them all;" and that he was "dashing about bareheaded (having lost his hat), in the thickest of the fights, cheering his men and being himself everywhere at the right time."

"He led the last charge in person," says one who witnessed the battle, "and when he returned, some of the Arkansas troops who did not know who he was, but recognized him as the person who had led them so gallantly, proposed three cheers for the 'man with the spectacles' which were heartily given. Just then

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some one coming up and telling them who he was, some one called out, 'General, we've cheered your spectacles, and now we'll cheer you,' and so they did most lustily.'

His military reputation was established, and his reception in Lexington, where he arrived on the 4th of September, was most enthusiastic. Vast quantities of stores of all kinds, arms, ammunition wagons, horses and mules came into his possession and he was received by the people of the region with marked attention, the leading Union men with the Legislature having fled to Louisville. Recruiting camps were established in the neighborhood of Lexington for the formation of cavalry regiments.

The victorious forces marched from Lexington through Paris and Cynthiana to within a short distance of Cincinnati, which took alarm at their approach. The orders were given "to *menace*, not to attack" Cincinnati; and General Kirby-Smith regretfully retired from before the Queen City of the West and arrived in Frankfort on the 4th of October. Orders were received too late for him to engage in the Battle of Perryville. He arrived in Harrodsburg, where he joined the main army on the 9th of October.

It was at Harrodsburg that an incident occurred, related in Bishop Quintard's *Memoirs of the War*, which illustrates the deep religious character of Gen-

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eral Kirby-Smith. The Bishop relates that at the request of General Polk, who was also Bishop Polk, he went into the church in Harrodsburg, said the litany and other prayers with the Bishop-General and gave him the benediction from the office for the visitation of the sick. "Shortly after this service," continued Bishop Quintard, "General Kirby-Smith begged me that he might go to the church with me, so I returned, and he too was refreshed at God's altar."

There was an engagement of five hours between a part of General Kirby-Smith's forces and a detachment of the Federals on the 10th of October, and then the army pursued its way unmolested, reaching Knoxville on the 24th of October. The General was absent a short time on leave, in consequence of ill health, but returned to his post early in November, retaining command of the East Tennessee Department.

CHAPTER XII

IN THE TRANS-MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT

MANY were the letters of congratulation received by General Kirby-Smith from his fellow-officers upon his military successes in the Kentucky campaign, and the Confederate Congress passed a joint resolution of thanks for the battle of Richmond, to him and his lieutenants so specially commended by him, and to all the officers and soldiers of his command in that battle. He was also promoted to Lieutenant-General. He was, however, disappointed at the result of the Kentucky Campaign and wrote to President Davis asking to be relieved from his command in Bragg's army, and to be assigned to duty in Alabama and Mississippi. On the 29th of October, President Davis wrote to him as follows:

“General Bragg cannot move into Middle Tennessee with prospect of success without your co-operation. You are now second in rank and possess to an eminent degree the confidence of the country. Your own corps could not be so usefully led by another commander. How then can I withdraw you or withhold your troops? Your Department will remain to you. Such part of your force as can be spared from it for

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the present, you can lead with the army of General Bragg into Middle Tennessee.

"If I were sure that General Bragg could get, say 30,000 new troops in Tennessee, I would not hesitate, upon your request, to assign you to the duty of covering Mobile, Columbus and Vicksburg, by placing your army at Selma and Meridian to act as might be necessary. We dare not rely on the promised aid, however we may hope to receive it. . . . May God direct and protect you, is the sincere prayer of your friend.

"Before closing I will renew my thanks to your brave troops for your patient fortitude and heroic daring on the march, and in the battle during your campaign in Kentucky."

The following description of him at this time may be found in the Southern Historical Society Papers:

"General Kirby-Smith is comparatively young—just fairly entering upon the prime of life. He is thirty-seven. You would not be impressed upon seeing him as by a man of remarkable intellectual endowments, but the phrenologist would say that his high, receding forehead, narrow at the base, but prominent over the eyes and widening as it ascends, gives evidence, if not of great mental powers, of uncommon quickness of perception and rapid mental movements. Tall, sinewy, not ungraceful, every gesture indicates intense physical activity and muscular vigor. In perfect health, blackhaired, blackbearded and mustached, slightly graying; black eyes, penetrating and restless;

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swarthy complexion; the simple statement of these features might give the idea of only the rude, rough soldier; but on the contrary, . . . I have known no officer of the army more habitually under the influences of the kindlier virtues and emotions. An earnest Christian and a gentleman, pleasant manners flow naturally from the goodness of his heart, while an impulsive temper is kept under almost perfect control. At this time he was little known to the country. A grand charge at Manassas, which he led with dashing courage, routing the enemy and deciding the victory; a wound believed to be mortal and nearly proving so, had given rank to the man who had led five and twenty thousand soldiers into one of the most hazardous, and up to a certain point, most brilliant campaigns of modern warfare. If Morgan had been captured and Louisville had been occupied, ensuring the overthrow of Buell, as some military critics are saying (and not without a show of reason, it must be confessed) might have been done, the name of Kirby-Smith would have been placed at once high upon the roll of great Captains."

The General had a decided preference for a life of active service in the field. In January, 1863, however, he was called to Richmond to assist in the re-organization of the Confederate Army, and the following month he was appointed by the President to the command of the Department West of the Mississippi. At first he demurred, saying to the President: "Am I then to be sent into exile?"

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But he was prevailed upon to accept the appointment to the comparatively remote and quiet region, and in the early part of April he arrived in Alexandria, Louisiana, which had been named as his headquarters.

On the 7th of March, 1863, he assumed command of all the Confederate forces West of the Mississippi, through general orders; thereby relieving General Holmes, who continued in service under him. The following May, he removed his headquarters to Shreveport, took command of the Trans-Mississippi Department, comprising Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Indian Territory, and began the organization of the government there, as he had been directed to do. So successful was he in his administration of the affairs of his department that the Confederacy established a Postoffice Department there, and a branch of the Treasury Department.

After the surrender of Vicksburg, the Mississippi River was in possession of the Federal Army, the Trans-Mississippi Department was cut off from the Confederate States of the East, and the transmission of troops, or even of orders, was attended with almost insuperable difficulties, rendering the Trans-Mississippi Department virtually independent and self-sustaining; requiring the exercise of plenary powers on the part of the Commanding General. In fact, it is related that when President Davis explained to the General that he wanted him to exercise civil as well

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as military authority, the General protested that there was no constitutional authority for his doing so. The President, however, urged that the exigencies of the case demanded it and were superior to all law. The latter thereupon gave to the General verbal instructions which it was said he would not have dared to commit to writing.

With full control and unlimited command over the vast territory, General Kirby-Smith thoroughly organized the Department, gathered the scattered forces, brought order out of confusion and established strong government. He called together the governors of the States, the Judges of the Supreme Courts, and other prominent officials for consultation, and on the 18th of August, 1863, the Governors united in an "Address to the People of Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Missouri, and the Allied Indian Nations," in which they unanimously "sustained the vigorous and decided policy he proposed to pursue."

"We are fortunate," declared the address, "in the military chief of this Department. In the prime of life, of large experience, active, intelligent and with the prestige of uniform success in his undertakings, he is guided by a profound respect for law and the constitutional rights of the citizens. Reposing full trust in him, we cordially commend him to your entire confidence and support. In view of the existing state of your affairs he has been clothed with

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more than usual powers by the President, to be exercised within the bounds of Constitution and the law. These just and legal powers he may have to exert promptly and boldly to their fullest extent, for the common good; in so doing he will receive the zealous support of every patriot."

The General gave immediate attention to the economic conditions of his Department; took steps to learn the whole resources of the country — mineral, agricultural and manufacturing; and made wise use of the information he collated. He made his communications with the Confederate capital by running the blockade at Galveston, Texas, and Wilmington, North Carolina; sent large quantities of cotton to Confederate agents abroad; introduced machinery from Europe; established factories and machine shops and salt works; manufactured and traded with England, and so made the Department the only really productive portion of the Confederacy. Texas was a cotton producing State, and though her navigable rivers were not then available for trade, and she had none of the railroads she has at present, ox and mule teams brought cotton over the plains for great distances — four hundred miles in some instances — to Brownsville, whence it was exported. Through his cotton bureau the General bought it at three and four cents a pound and sold it at fifty cents a pound in gold, and it passed in constant streams, in defiance of blockades,

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to the agents of the Department abroad. It is estimated that in 1863-64 more than 500,000 bales of cotton reached Europe by these means. Texas escaped the destruction which fell upon the other States of the Confederacy, and there the crops of grain were the largest ever known. She was accordingly able to supply the adjacent parts of the country with grain, beef and mutton, and emphasized to the Federals the importance of the possession of the Mississippi River.

The forces of the Trans-Mississippi Department were not wholly withdrawn from the scenes of war. Of the military operations in which they were engaged in the defense of the Red River, and the repulse of the invasion of General Banks, we have the narrative of the Military Chief, who was on the 19th of February, 1864, advanced to the rank of full General in the Provisional Army of the Confederate States, being one of seven to attain to that rank in the Confederate Army, and one of that distinguished group comprising Samuel Cooper, Albert Sidney Johnston, Robert E. Lee, Joseph E. Johnston, G. P. T. Beauregard, and Braxton Bragg, and having no one above him in rank West of the Mississippi. This narrative was taken chiefly from two official letters written by him to the President of the Confederate States, while the events were fresh in the writer's mind and before either prejudice or any personal animus could have biased his feelings:

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“Soon after my arrival in the Trans-Mississippi Department,” wrote General Kirby-Smith, “I became convinced that the valley of the Red River was the only practicable line of operations by which the enemy could penetrate the country. The fact was well understood and appreciated by their Generals. I addressed myself to the task of defending this line with the slender means at my disposal. Fortifications were erected on the Lower Red River; Shreveport and Camden were fortified, and works were ordered on the Sabine and the crossings of the Upper Red. Depots were established on the shortest lines of communication between the Red River Valley and the troops serving in Arkansas and Texas. Those commands were directed to be held ready to move with little delay, and every preparation was made in advance for accelerating a concentration, at all times difficult over long distances, and through a country destitute of supplies and with limited means of transportation.

“In February, 1864, the enemy was preparing in New Orleans, Vicksburg and Little Rock for offensive operations. Though 25,000 of the enemy were reported on the Texas coast, my information convinced me that the valley of the Red River would be the principal theatre of operations and Shreveport the objective point of the columns moving from Arkansas and Louisiana. On the 21st of February, General

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Magruder, commanding in Texas, was ordered to hold Green's Division of cavalry in readiness to move at a moment's warning, and on the 5th of March the division was ordered to march at once to Alexandria and report to General Taylor, who had command in Louisiana. About that time the enemy commenced massing his forces at Berwick Bay.

On the 12th of March, a column of 10,000 men, composed of portions of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Army Corps under General A. J. Smith, moved down from Vicksburg to Simsport and advanced with such celerity on Fort DeRussy, taking it in reverse, that General Taylor was not allowed time to concentrate and cover this important work, our only means of arresting the progress of the gunboats. The fall of this work and the immediate movement of the enemy, by means of his transports, to Alexandria, placed General Taylor in a very embarrassing position. He extricated himself with his characteristic tact by a march of seventy miles through the pine woods. Banks now pressed forward from Berwick Bay, by the line of the Teche, and by the aid of steamers on both the Mississippi and Red Rivers, concentrated at Alexandria a force of over 30,000 men, supported by the most powerful naval armament ever employed on a river.

"As soon as I received intelligence of the debarkation of the enemy at Simsport, I ordered General

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Price, who commanded in Arkansas, to dispatch his entire cavalry, consisting of Churchill's and Parsons' Divisions, to Shreveport, and General Maxey to move towards General Price, and as soon as Steele advanced, to join Price with his whole command, Indians included. The cavalry east of the Ouichita was directed to fall back toward Natchitoches and subsequently to oppose, as far as possible, the advance of the enemy's fleet. It was under the command of General St. John R. Liddell. All disposable infantry in Texas was directed on Marshall, and although the enemy still had a force of several thousand on the coast, I reduced the number of men holding the defenses to an absolute minimum. General Magruder's field report shows that but 2,300 men were left in Texas. Except these, every effective soldier in the department was put in front of Steele or in support of Taylor.

"The enemy was operating with a force, according to my information, fully 50,000 effective men. With the utmost powers of concentration, not 25,000 men of all arms could be brought to oppose his movements. Taylor had at Mansfield, after the junction of Green, 11,000 effectives with 5,000 infantry from Price's army in one day's march of him at Keachie. Price, with 6,000 or 8,000 cavalry, was engaged in holding in check the advance of Steele, whose column, according to our information, did not number less than 15,000 of all arms. Shreveport was made the point

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of concentration; with its fortifications covering the depots, arsenals, and shops at Jefferson, Marshall and above, it was a strategic point of vital importance. All the infantry, not with Taylor opposed to Banks, was directed on Shreveport. Price with his cavalry command was instructed to delay the march of Steel's column whilst the concentration was being made. Occupying a central position at Shreveport, with the enemy's columns approaching from opposite directions, I proposed drawing them within striking distance, when by concentrating upon and striking them in detail, both columns might be crippled or destroyed.

"Banks pushed on to Natchitoches. It was expected he would be detained there several days in accumulating supplies. Steele on the Little Missouri and Banks at Natchitoches were but about one hundred miles from Shreveport or Marshall. The character of the country did not admit of their forming a junction above Natchitoches, and if they advanced I hoped by refusing one of them, to fight the other with my whole force.

"It seemed probable at that time that Steele would advance first. When he reached Prairie d'Ane, two routes were open to him: the one to Marshall, crossing the river at Fulton, the other direct to Shreveport. I consequently held Price's infantry, under Churchill, a few days at Shreveport. Steele's hesita-

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ation and the reports of the advance of Banks' cavalry caused me, on the 4th of April, to move Churchill to Keachie, a point twenty miles in rear of Mansfield, where the road divides to go to Marshall and Shreveport. He was directed to report to General Taylor. I now visited and conferred with General Taylor. He believed that General Banks could not yet advance his infantry across the barren country lying between Natchitoches and Mansfield.

"I returned to Shreveport and wrote General Taylor not to risk a general engagement, but to select a position in which to give battle should Banks advance, and by a reconnoissance in force to compel the enemy to display his infantry and to notify me as soon as he had done so, and I would join him in the front.

"The reconnoissance was converted into a decisive engagement near Mansfield, on the 8th of April, with the advance of the enemy (a portion of the Thirteenth Corps and his cavalry); and by the rare intrepidity of Mouton's Division resulted in a complete victory over the forces engaged. The battle of Mansfield was not an intentional violation, on General Taylor's part, of my instructions. The Federal cavalry had pushed forward so far in advance of their column as to completely cover its movements, and General Taylor reported to me by dispatch at 12 meridian of the day on which the battle took place, that there was no advance made from Grand Ecore except of cavalry.

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In fact, however, General Franklin with his infantry was on the march, and at once pushed forward to the support of the cavalry. When General Mouton with his division drove in the cavalry, he struck the head of Franklin's troops, and by a vigorous and able attack, without waiting for orders from Taylor, repulsed and drove back Franklin's advance and opened the battle of Mansfield, which, when Taylor came to the front, with his accustomed boldness and vigor he pushed to a complete success.

"Churchill with his infantry, under Tappan and Parsons, joined Taylor that night. The next morning Taylor, advancing in force, found the enemy in position at Pleasant Hill. Our troops attacked with vigor and at first with success; but, exposing their right flank, were finally repulsed and thrown into confusion. The Missouri and Arkansas troops, with a brigade of Walker's Division, were broken and scattered. The enemy recovered cannon which we had captured the day before; and two of our pieces, with the dead and wounded, were left on the field. Our repulse at Pleasant Hill was so complete, and our command was so disorganized that had Banks followed up his success vigorously he would have met with but feeble opposition to his advance on Shreveport.

"Having ridden forward at 2 a.m. on receipt of Taylor's report of the Battle of Mansfield, I joined Taylor after dark on the 8th, a few yards in the rear

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of the battlefield of that day. Polignac's (previously Mouton's) Division of Louisiana infantry was all that was intact of Taylor's force. Assuming command, I countermanded the order that had been given for the retreat of Polignac's Division, and was consulting with General Taylor when some stragglers from the battlefield, where our wounded were still lying, brought the intelligence that Banks had precipitately retreated after the battle, converting a victory which he might have claimed, into a defeat. Our troops in rear rallied and the field was next day occupied by us.

"Banks continued his retreat to Grand Ecore, where he intrenched himself and remained until the return of his fleet and its safe passage over the bars, made especially difficult this season by the unusual fall of the river.

"Our troops were completely paralyzed and disorganized by the repulse at Pleasant Hill, and the cavalry, worn by its long march from Texas, had been constantly engaged for three days, almost without food or forage. Before we could reorganize at Mansfield and get into condition to advance over the fifty-five miles of wilderness that separated our armies, the enemy had been reënforced and intrenched at Grand Ecore. The enemy held possession of the river until he evacuated Grand Ecore.

"Steele was slowly advancing from the Little Mis-

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souri to the Prairie d'Ane. I deemed it imprudent to follow Banks below Grand Ecore with my whole force, and leave Steele so near Shreveport. Even had I been able to throw Banks across the Atchafalaya, the high water of that stream would have arrested my farther progress. An intercepted dispatch from General Sherman to General A. J. Smith, directing the immediate return of the latter's force to Vicksburg, removed the last doubt in my mind that Banks would withdraw to Alexandria as rapidly as possible, and it was hoped that the Falls would detain his fleet there until we could dispose of Steele, when the entire force of the Department would be free to operate against him. I confidently hoped, if I could reach Steele with my infantry, to beat him at a distance from his depot, in a poor country, and with my large cavalry force to destroy his army. The prize would have been the Arkansas Valley and the powerful fortifications of Little Rock. Steele's defeat or retreat would leave me in position promptly to support Taylor's operations against Banks.

"Leaving Taylor with his cavalry, now under Wharton, and the Louisiana Division of infantry under Polignac, to follow up Bank's retreat, and taking the Texas, Arkansas and Missouri Divisions of infantry, I moved against Steele's column in Arkansas. Steele entered Camden, where he was too strong for the assault, but the capture of his train at the Battle of

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Mark's Mill on the 25th of April forced him to evacuate Camden on the 28th, and the Battle of Jenkins' Ferry on the Saline, April 30th, completed his discomfiture. He retreated to Little Rock. Churchill, Parsons and Walker were at once marched across the country to the support of Taylor, but before the juncture could be effected, Banks had gone.

"To return to Taylor; after the enemy left Grand Ecore, General Taylor attacked his rear at Cloutierville, whilst a detachment under Bee held the Federal advance in check at Monette's Ferry. General Taylor's force was, however, too weak to warrant the hope that he could seriously impede the march of Banks' column. After the latter reached Alexandria, General Taylor transferred a part of his command to the river below Alexandria, and with unparalleled audacity and great ability and success, operated on the enemy's gunboats and transports.

"The construction of the dam, aided by a temporary rise in Red River, enabled Admiral Porter to get his fleet over the Falls. Had he delayed but one week longer, our whole infantry force would have been united against him. Banks evacuated Alexandria on the 12th and 13th of May, the fleet quitted the Red River and the campaign ended with the occupation of all the country we had held at the beginning, as well as of the lower Teche. The operations of Taylor on Red River and Marmaduke on the Mississippi, pre-

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vented A. J. Smith from obeying Sherman's order to return to Vicksburg in time for the Atlanta campaign."

The campaign of General Banks which thus came to naught, involved that General in a lifelong quarrel with some of his coadjutors; and the Committee of the Federal Congress on the Conduct of the War, after an investigation in 1865, brought in charges against him, that what he had in view was to establish a State government in Louisiana and to afford an egress for cotton and other products of the region; and that the attention diverted to these objects had exerted an unfavorable influence upon the expedition.

The military operations of the Trans-Mississippi Department in opposition to the Banks expedition likewise resulted in a misunderstanding between General Kirby-Smith and some of the ill-advised friends of General Dick Taylor. To the earliest published criticisms of General Kirby-Smith's conduct of affairs in his Department, General Taylor himself replied, and this should have made unnecessary any further newspaper war. But not only was the discussion continued in the newspapers of the Department, but it was in time transferred from Louisiana to Richmond; and *The Whig* of that city published communications and editorials, denunciatory of the Commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department,

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declaring that he had it at one time in his power to secure the permanent safety of the Department; to capture the city of New Orleans; to so cripple the enemy east of the Mississippi as to enable General Early to capture the city of Washington, and to enable the Army of the Tennessee to drive Sherman back upon his defences before he could reach Atlanta. This auspicious occasion was after the battle of Pleasant Hill. The brilliant opportunity to accomplish the complete overthrow of the Federal government and the triumph of the Confederate arms, was thrown away by General Kirby-Smith's ordering a portion of the force under the command of General Dick Taylor into Arkansas for the purpose of opposing and driving back the column of General Steele. This altogether untenable theory of the conduct of the war was made to emphasize the charge that General Kirby-Smith was incompetent.

The General was not without friends to reply to all the aspersions cast upon his character and competency, and the public press contained long controversies on the conduct of affairs in the Department. On the 9th of March, 1865, the General wrote to President Davis as follows:

"I have been attacked in the columns of the Richmond *Whig*. I know that efforts have been made through other journals east of the Mississippi to pre-

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judice the public mind and destroy confidence in the purity of my motives and in my ability to command.

“While giving my energies to the maintenance and defense of the Department especially entrusted to my charge, I have ever felt the deepest interest in the struggle elsewhere; and have never failed to co-operate with the means at my disposal in ensuring its success. I have faithfully and honestly, to the extent of my abilities, discharged the great duties confided to me. I do not know that I have given you entire satisfaction. I do know that you are often embarrassed in doing what you believe to be for the general good. I desire to aid and not embarrass you in your action, and request that this letter may be regarded as an application to be relieved from the command of the Department whenever you believe that the public interests will be advanced thereby.”

The Trans-Mississippi Department had its enemies in the Congress of the Confederate States, though it apparently had a staunch friend to the very end, in the President of the Confederacy. In the latter part of the year 1864, there were successive resolutions introduced into Congress evidently intended to annoy the President with regard to the Department. Congress wanted to know the amount of money expended upon the Department, since General Kirby-Smith assumed command. It wanted to investigate the

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reports of the military operations there. It wanted a thorough investigation of the cotton transactions in the Department and of the alleged sales of cotton, by the authorities, to the enemy. And after the Texas State Legislature had by joint resolution tendered thanks to General Kirby-Smith for his work in the defense of the State from the invasion of the enemy, the following resolution was introduced into the Confederate Congress, to be called up again and again for debate before it was finally adopted:

"Resolved, That General E. Kirby-Smith has distinguished his administration of the Trans-Mississippi Department, by his justice, his firmness and moderation, his integrity and conscientious regard for law, his unaffected kindness to the people, the protection of their rights and the redress of their wrongs, and has thus won the confidence of Congress. That the thanks of Congress are due and are extended to General E. Kirby-Smith and to the commanders of the armies, General Sterling Price in Arkansas and General Richard Taylor in Louisiana, and to all officers and soldiers of their commands for the brilliant campaign in Arkansas and Louisiana in the months of April and May, 1864. That the President be requested to communicate these resolutions to the officers named and to the armies of the Trans-Mississippi."

The Confederate Government collapsed before the conduct of affairs in the Trans-Mississippi Department could be officially investigated, or General Kirby-

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Smith would undoubtedly have been by this means cleared of any imputation of malfeasance, incompetency, or shortcomings of any kind. Vague rumors without any responsible persons back of them, floated about and gained credence in that class of people ever ready to believe what it suits them to believe, and who fail to consider that the burden of proof rests with the traducers of another's character. A writer just after the war, who was evidently not in sympathy with him, though he was a Captain in the Confederate Army, furnishes us with the sum and substance of these rumors in the following words, with which he concludes a biographical sketch of the General:

“Various reports as to his movements and intentions were spread abroad. Some said he was negotiating for a transfer of his forces to the Emperor of Mexico; others that he was engaged in heavy cotton speculations and defied alike the North and the South; and finally, that he was assassinated in a quarrel by an ex-officer of the Confederate Army, whom he had badly treated. But to none of these reports have we any positive evidence. There appears, however, to have been a spirit of recklessness and self-will on the part of all under his command; for it was reported in March (1865), that his troops refused to cross the Mississippi when ordered, and that he himself was frequently coerced into measures not emanating from his own ideas.”

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Without admitting the necessity of answering all these vague indefinite aspersions upon the General's character, it might be said of him as was said of General Banks. The latter passed the years of his life subsequent to the war in honorable poverty, which was taken as the best answer to the charges made against him by his enemies. So it was with General Kirby-Smith, as we shall see. But further than that, the whole life of General Kirby-Smith, his well known character, the testimony of such men as General Joseph E. Johnston, who pronounced him "The Chevalier Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche*, of the Confederate Army;" the further testimony of all who knew him at any period of his career and who declare that his sense of honor and adherence to principle were ever his most prominent characteristics, are sufficient refutation of all the vague, irresponsible rumors set afloat regarding his character.

Whenever a specific charge was made against him, the General took pains to refute it promptly and fully. Such refutation was published with his narrative of the defense of the Red River, and may be given as follows. The charges in this case, as in all others, were anonymously made:

"I have read the statement in which are grouped in detail the covert insinuations, the gossip of camps and capitals, and the mis-statements of well known facts,

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that go to make up the old story of many versions, of an arrangement at Washington whereby Kirby Smith's army 'was to recede before the army of General Banks, falling back through the State of Texas, and finally to disband. In anticipation of this,' the story continues, 'Confederate cotton to an amount named, believed to be 25,000 bales, was to be gathered at convenient points for transportation and taken by three commissioners, residents of New Orleans, who would accompany the expedition under Banks, and sold by them; the proceeds to be divided like naval prize money, and to go to make a fund for the benefit of such Confederate officers and men as might expatriate themselves in Brazil or some other country. General Banks was assigned to the command of the Army of the West Mississippi after this arrangement was entered into and before its execution, was not a party to it, and purposely prevented its being carried out by bringing on the engagement at Mansfield. After the navy commenced taking the cotton, claiming it as a prize of war, a wrangle began over it and its destruction commenced.'

"I remark in passing that neither an emphatic statement in regard to General Taylor nor the equally explicit one about the destruction of cotton, can stand the test of dates; for General Taylor had been in command since 1862, in fact, before either General Banks or myself, and I ordered the cotton to be burned,

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in accordance with the settled policy of the Confederacy, as soon as I heard of Banks' movement, and before I knew of the approach of the navy. There is not the least foundation upon which this story could rest. The circumstances alleged are impossible to have happened without my having been a party to them. My power in the Trans-Mississippi Department was almost absolute. I bought cotton through my cotton bureau at three and four cents a pound and sold it at fifty cents a pound in gold. It passed in constant streams by several crossings of the Rio Grande, as well as through Galveston, to the agents abroad. It would have been absurd in me to have called in the devious and uncertain agency of a Federal army and of cotton speculators from within the Union lines, when I could at any time have safely exported and placed to my credit abroad, thousands of bales of cotton."

Probably the most annoying of all the rumors circulated about the General was the wholly baseless one accusing him of speculating in cotton to his own personal advantage. The cotton transactions of the Trans-Mississippi Department gave rise to suits at law in the Federal Courts of the United States, in which the Federal Government, and the Navy Department were involved as parties, and in which the transactions were investigated in all their various

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phases; and nothing was found that could by any possibility implicate General Kirby-Smith in any questionable transaction. The agent of the Confederate Government, alleged to have been his private agent, appeared before a special committee from the Federal Treasury Department and gave apparently satisfactory evidence regarding the nature of his mission to England, in the course of which he emphatically and indignantly denied the rumored report that he had acted as General Kirby-Smith's private agent for the disposal of cotton for the General's private account, or that the General was capable of such a thing as was alleged of him. The Committee replied: "Set your mind at rest upon that score. We know all about it. We have investigated that thing to the bottom. There is no Confederate officer West of the Mississippi river implicated in any of the cotton frauds except one: that is Major B——."

While a few of the newspapers were critical of the General's character and conduct at the time when the Confederacy was about to collapse and men were becoming in their despondency censorious, the majority were disposed to take a sane view of the situation and to defend the General from unjust attacks. "Every one who knows General Kirby-Smith, personally, or has known him before," declared one of the Texas papers in March, 1865, "will at once

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recognize the absurdity of attributing to him any conduct unworthy a Christian and a gentleman, and the much greater absurdity of supposing that he would do any act to tarnish the brilliant military reputation which secures him not only place and power (which to the patriot are minor considerations) but also the confidence and esteem of his countrymen and the gratitude of posterity.”

A week later another paper pursuing the same subject declared: “We are just as capable of distrust of Robert E. Lee as of Kirby-Smith. The one not more than the other is the soul of honor, conscientiousness and fidelity to the sternest, strictest duty. General Jo. Johnston fitly designated him ‘the Chevalier Bayard of the Southern Army.’ ”

Testimony such as this as to the character of General Kirby-Smith might be multiplied indefinitely from Confederate sources. But here is some from another source which can surely not be suspected of any favorable bias. A correspondent of the *New York World*, writing in July, 1865, to contradict the report, then widely circulated, that the Confederate soldiers and officers were colonizing in Mexico, bent upon mischief, wrote that a few only were in Mexico, and these desired to return if the exceptions to the amnesty then in vogue should be revoked in their favor, and added: “There is no design on their part, as I am credibly informed, to enter the military service

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of Mexico. If other resources fail, they may be compelled to do so. Nor is it true of Kirby-Smith and Magruder, as has been frequently asserted, that they had feathered their nests with cotton speculations. Both were compelled to live on borrowed money, and a mere pittance was all they procured. This account I have from persons whom I know to be men of truth, and who were in confidential relations with each of them, and they say that neither of them made use of their position to procure or retain advantage for themselves."

About the same time a correspondent of the New York *Times* wrote: "It has been currently rumored through the country that Generals Smith and Magruder engaged extensively in cotton speculations and made a heap of money which they took with them when they fled to Mexico. Now, permit one who knows, to state that there is not a word of truth in all this — not a word. General Smith had no money of his own to speculate on; he neither hired nor borrowed any for this purpose — he never shared the profits with any one who did speculate — he never used or appropriated to his own use one dollar of the government funds. In other words he never 'speculated' to the extent of one dime while commanding this Department, although to my certain knowledge more than one opportunity offered wherein, by simply turning his hand, he could have made \$100,000 or

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\$150,000 in gold. Independent of his political and military character, of which it does not become me to speak, I will say that a purer man than General E. Kirby-Smith never was intrusted with government funds."

The writer of the above then goes on to narrate circumstances attending the surrender of the Department which will be related in the following chapter, and answers the charge in much the same manner with respect to General Magruder.

To this testimony from entirely unprejudiced persons may be added the testimony of a Union paper published in Galveston at the time of the reported assassination of the General:

"He was an able commander in the field, devoted to the cause he espoused, and essentially a warm-hearted, true man. However much we may condemn the policy he pursued latterly; as a commander, we have no hesitation in saying that we consider him one of the purest and best men, in a moral sense, connected with the Confederate service, and the reports circulated prejudicial to his integrity are without foundation."

The report that the General was negotiating with the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico for the transfer of his troops, requires no explanation. The sympathy of the Confederate States with the Maximilian régime

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in Mexico is well known. And as the Confederacy fell to pieces, the leaders, especially those of the Southwest, naturally sought personal asylums in the Mexican Empire. The following extracts from letters written by the General show the extent of his "negotiations" with the Emperor of Mexico; and they are, furthermore, interesting as showing the state of feeling in the Confederate Army at the time they were written. The letters were written to Mr. Rose, who had, sometime before the war, been connected with the United States Government in a diplomatic capacity, and who now applied to General Kirby-Smith for permission to cross the Rio Grande on private business. A letter written in February, 1865, conveyed the desired permission and, in general terms sent messages of regard to the Mexican government. By a letter of the same date, the General wrote:

"While in the City of Mexico I desire you, on some fitting occasion, to make known to His Majesty, the Emperor, that in case of unexampled catastrophe to our arms and the final overthrow of the government which I have the honor to represent as the Military Chief of the States West of the Missississippi River — an event I do not now apprehend, but which yet may possibly occur in the future — it is my fixed purpose to leave my native land and seek an asylum in Mexico. Bred to the profession of arms, having such

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education in my profession as the best military schools in the United States offer, with the benefit of foreign travel and some experience such as is acquired by the command of armies in the field for more than two years, it is my desire still to continue in the exercise of the profession of my choice. Having some knowledge of the French and Spanish languages and having been on duty at one period on the Mexican Frontier, my humble services and such influence as I could exert might be rendered available to His Majesty's Government. I therefore authorize you to tender them to him in the possibility of the contingency above alluded to. The natural antipathy that would exist in the minds of many citizens of the Confederate States to those of the North, together with their intelligence, endurance and daring as soldiers, might, in contemplation of possible collision between the Imperial Government and the United States of the North, render very desirable such a corps of Southern soldiers as might be induced by the offer of liberal terms to colonize the Empire and thus greatly strengthen it. Should you find that this offer and the accompanying views are not wholly inappropriate to be alluded to, you will please tender my services to the Emperor and at the same time assure him of my heartfelt wish for the eminent success of his reign and the honor, welfare and happiness of his people."

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On the 2nd of May, the General wrote again upon the subject:

“Having entire confidence in your patriotism and experience, I have deemed you a suitable person to present to His Majesty the Emperor certain views as to the future interest of the Confederate States and the Empire of Mexico. As the Military Commander of this Department, I have no authority to appoint diplomatic agents or to initiate negotiations with foreign Powers. Yet in the present condition of our national affairs, I deem it highly important from a military point of view, at least, to place myself in communication with the Government of Mexico. While, therefore, you will expressly disclaim any authority from the Confederate Government to act in a diplomatic capacity, you may give assurances that there is every probability that our Government will be willing to enter into a liberal arrangement with the authorities of the Mexican Empire based upon the principle of mutual protection from their common enemy. It cannot be disguised that recent reverses of the most serious character have befallen the Confederate arms. Nor can it be denied that there is a probability of still further losses to us. It may even be that it is the inscrutable design of Him who rules the destinies of nations that the day of our ultimate redemption should be postponed. If then, final catas-

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trophe should overwhelm our just cause, the contiguity of Mexico to us and the future designs of the United States must naturally be a subject of the deepest solicitude to His Imperial Majesty.

“From the solemn action of their Houses of Congress, from the public expressions of eminent persons standing high in the confidence of both the civil and military authorities of the United States, from the tone of their public journals, which have hitherto rarely failed to foreshadow the policy of that Government, it is plain that further schemes of ambition and of territorial aggrandizement are being nursed and matured by the United States. It is equally clear, judging by the signs of the times, that they look with jealous eyes upon the neighboring Empire of Mexico, and that they meditate a blow aimed at its destruction. Your own information on these points will enable you to expose more fully the ambitious designs of our enemy in that quarter.

“If such be the ultimate purpose of the Federal Government, it cannot fail to strike His Imperial Highness that in the Confederate States, and more especially in the Department adjoining his dominions, and over which I have the honor to preside as Military Chief, there are many trained soldiers inured to the hardships of the field and inspired with a bitter hatred of the Federals, whose services might be tendered to him against the North. There is under

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my command an army of 60,000 men. Of these there are 9,000 Missourians, good soldiers, who have been driven from their homes and would no doubt, upon favorable inducements as to immigration and protection being held out to them, take service with the power so favoring them. There are, besides, no less than 10,000 men, daring and gallant spirits from other States, in this Department, to whom a state of vassalage to the Federal Government would be intolerable and who would gladly rally around any flag that promised to lead them to battle against their former foe. These men are commanded by veteran officers who have repeatedly led them in action and who thoroughly understand their character and could control them without difficulty. If I am not mistaken in my conclusion as to the future policy of the United States, the propriety of an understanding between the Emperor and the Confederate States Government for their mutual defence will be apparent to His Majesty. The services of our troops would be of inestimable value to him. You will ascertain, if possible, the views of the Emperor on these subjects, and should the occasion seem favorable, inform yourself fully as to the probable terms and conditions upon which an agreement for mutual protection could be determined upon."

The events recorded in the following chapter not only changed General Kirby-Smith's views altogether

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regarding the possibility of establishing such relations with the Mexican Empire, but convinced him, as we shall see, that such a course would have been unwise had it been possible.

CHAPTER XII

THE SURRENDER

THE catastrophe which General Kirby-Smith foresaw when writing to Mr. Rose, in February, 1865, finally overtook the Confederacy. When the news of Lee's surrender reached the headquarters of the Trans-Mississippi Department, the following address was issued to the army:

“Headquarters Trans-Mississippi Department,
“Shreveport, La., April 21st, 1865.

“Soldiers of the Trans-Mississippi Army:

“The crisis of our revolution is at hand. Great disasters have overtaken us. The Army of Northern Virginia and our Commander-in-Chief are prisoners of war. With you rests the hope of our nation, and upon your action depends the fate of our people. I appeal to you in the name of the cause you have so heroically maintained — in the name of your firesides and families so dear to you — in the name of your bleeding country whose future is in your hands. Show that you are worthy of your position in history. Prove to the world that your hearts have not failed in the hour of disaster, and that to the last moment you will sustain the holy cause which has been so gloriously battled for by your brethren east of the Mississippi.

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“You possess the means of long resisting the invasion; you have hopes of succor from abroad. Protract the struggle and you will surely receive the aid of nations who already deeply sympathize with you.

“Stand by your colors, maintain your discipline. The great resources of this Department, its vast extent, the numbers, the discipline and efficiency of our army, will secure to our country terms that a proud people can with honor accept; and may, under the providence of God, be the means of checking the triumph of our enemy and securing the final success of our cause.

(Signed)

“E. KIRBY-SMITH,
General.”

Doubtless this address seemed to many at the time as if inspired by desperation rather than by prudent generalship. But the region west of the Mississippi was looked upon as a fair field on which to make the final struggle of the war. There had been, in fact, an effort made to cut Texas loose from the Confederacy and to establish a “Lone Star Republic,” to extend from the Gulf to the Pacific. The feeling at that time was general in the Department, that not only could “Kirby-Smithdom,” as it was called, offer resistance indefinitely, but that it could afford a refuge to the defeated leaders of the Confederacy. At the North there was a similar feeling, and the newspapers

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declared that General Kirby-Smith had the means at hand to establish and maintain an empire.

A public meeting was held at Shreveport on the 26th of April to consider the situation, and the purport of all the speeches was — continued resistance. Definite plans were laid for sending a commissioner to Havana to meet President Davis and his cabinet, who were expected to escape thither, and to bring them by way of the Rio Grande to the Trans-Mississippi Department. The capture of the President in Georgia on the 10th of May, frustrated these plans, and the news of one unfortunate event after another followed quickly to the region west of the Mississippi. By the convention of General Johnston with General Sherman, and by the capitulation of General Dick Taylor, all of the troops east of the Mississippi were surrendered and paroled. General Grant's commissioners arrived in the Red River district with a view to arranging for the surrender of the Trans-Mississippi forces, and, about the middle of May, General Kirby-Smith received and declined (as not offering sufficient security for life and property and respect for constitutional rights), a proposition for the surrender of the troops under his command. He had called a meeting of the Trans-Mississippi Governors, at Marshall, Texas, for the purpose of opening negotiations upon a basis to which he could honorably subscribe.

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On the 17th of May, he received from Governor Murrah, of Texas, a telegram saying that in the opinion of the Governor, the army should not be surrendered or disbanded until the terms offered by the Federal Government included security for life and property and respect for constitutional rights. To this the General replied that if he could be supported therein by the State authorities and by the troops, he did not propose to accept any other terms. The same day he received a long dispatch from General Magruder stating that the troops in Texas were deserting and that there was no promise of their resisting further. Officers and men were insisting upon dividing the property before any settlement was made with the Federal authorities. "For God's sake, act or let me act!" were the emphatic words of the dispatch. General Walker, who was in command of the troops in Texas, concurred in this dispatch, writing thereon that the troops could not be relied upon to prolong the struggle. The contest was hopeless. The cavalry remained firm and quiet, but were only waiting for the inevitable result — the surrender.

On the 20th of May, the General, at the urgent and repeated request of the several commanders in Texas, issued orders for the transfer of the Department headquarters to Houston, and started for that place in advance of his staff with a view to repressing the discontent which existed among the Texas troops

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and of holding them together. He learned *en route* that the infantry of General Walker's Corps had disbanded at Hempstead, Texas. On the 25th, at Hempstead, he received a dispatch from General Magruder announcing that all the troops in his district had disbanded. The General found that the whole region was filled with "mobs of disorderly soldiery, thronging the roads, interrupting travel and making life and property exceedingly insecure." He called upon General Magruder to explain the causes of the disorganization, convened a court of inquiry to examine into the causes of the demoralization, and published in the papers the following address to the troops, urging obedience to the laws and a quiet return to the avocations of peace:

"Soldiers —The day after I refused the demands of the Federal Government for the surrender of this Department, I left Shreveport for Houston. I ordered the Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana troops to follow. My purpose was to concentrate the entire strength of the Department, await negotiations, and if possible, secure terms honorable alike to soldier and citizen. Failing in this, I intended to struggle to the last, and with an army united in purpose, firm in resolve and battling for the right, I believed that God would yet give us the victory. I reached here to find the Texas troops disbanded and hastening to their

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homes. They had forsaken their colors and their commanders; had abandoned the cause for which we were struggling and appropriated the public property to their personal use.

“Soldiers, I am left a commander without an army — a General without troops. You have made your choice. It was unwise and unpatriotic. But it is final. I pray you may not live to regret it. The enemy will now possess your country and dictate his own laws. You have voluntarily destroyed your organization and thrown away all means of resistance. Your present duty is plain. Return to your families. Resume the occupations of peace. Yield obedience to the laws. Labor to restore order. Strive both by counsel and example to give security to life and property. And may God in His mercy direct you aright and heal the wounds of our distracted country.”

At the same time he called upon Governor Murrah to employ State troops still under his control to collect and protect public property. He was therefore in no way responsible for the disbandment of the troops in his Department, and he made every effort to remedy the evil resulting from the disbandment, and to collect abandoned and stolen property. Passing on in the discharge of his duty and in his efforts to restore order, to Galveston, he learned there, on the 1st of June, that

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Lieutenant-General Buckner, his chief of staff, had proceeded to New Orleans and in the name of the General Commanding, had entered into negotiations with Major-General Canby for the surrender of the troops of the Department, and had, on the 26th of May, signed the surrender of the Department. General Kirby-Smith approved of this surrender, with the condition that the officers be allowed to leave the country. The terms were the same as those accorded to Lee, Johnston and Taylor. He signed the articles of the surrender on the 2nd of June, on the United States Steamer *Fort Jackson*, Captain B. F. Sands, commanding the Third Division of the West Gulf Squadron, off Galveston Harbor. He was accompanied by General Magruder and by the Federal Brigadier-General E. G. Davis. He issued the necessary orders, and so far as lay in his power endeavored to insure the proper execution of the terms of the surrender.

When it was learned by General-Kirby Smith, some time subsequently, that General Grant, in his official report of the surrender, had charged him with exhibiting bad faith in first disbanding his army and permitting an indiscriminate plunder of property before surrendering, General Kirby-Smith not only disproved the charge, but filed with the War Department at Washington, documentary evidence of the facts as above stated. Major-General P. H. Sheridan,

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also made a report to Army Headquarters, dated in November, 1866, derogatory to the character of General Kirby-Smith, containing the following statement regarding the surrender of the General "through Commissioners sent by him to Major-General Canby:"

"This surrender was made, but bore upon its face double dealing on the part of the rebel commander or his agents, as the Texas troops had declined to surrender and had disbanded to their homes, destroying magazines and carrying with them arms and ammunition from the different arsenals. General Smith proceeded to Galveston and from there escaped to Mexico, in violation of the agreement he had bound himself to observe.

"This conduct on his part," General Sheridan went on to say, "may have arisen from the fact that it could not be concealed that his real object in offering to surrender was to get security for the Arkansas, Louisiana and Missouri troops to return to their homes, knowing full well that the Texas troops did not intend to surrender and that the most of them had already gone to their homes; that while they were destroying their arsenals and carrying with them their arms, it was their constant boast that they would renew the fight at some future day."

To these statements General S. B. Buckner replied in a long letter published in the New York *Times* of

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January 10, 1867; showing, first, that the commissioners who negotiated the surrender of the Trans-Mississippi Department were not sent by General Kirby-Smith at all, but acted on their own responsibility, subject to the ratification of General Kirby-Smith; that the commissioners did not know at the time that the Texas troops had disbanded; that General Sheridan made statements which showed that the Federal Government was in possession of facts which it did not disclose to the Confederate commissioners pending the negotiations, upon which a charge of "double dealing" might have been made against the Federal Commissioners; that the convention was fairly negotiated by both parties with an honest intent and purpose of pacifying the country at the earliest possible day; that General Kirby-Smith's published proclamation should have convinced General Sheridan, as it did every one else, of his disapproval and censure of the acts of disbandment; that in going to Mexico, General Kirby-Smith violated no "agreement he had bound himself to observe;" that there was no term of the convention forbidding emigration; that both parties conceded the right of expatriation, and General Kirby-Smith expressly reserved to himself, in ratifying the convention, the right to leave the country; that although alleged that "it had been contemplated to organize a column of 15,000 Confederates at Marshall, Texas, for the invasion of Mexico," General

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Kirby-Smith had nothing to do with such a proposed expedition, which nevertheless contemplated "nothing favorable to the Mexican Empire or hostile to the United States Government."

Altogether General Buckner fully refuted "the allegations made against the fair fame and pure character" of General Kirby-Smith, and gave his testimony to the facts of the surrender as they have been substantially set forth above.

The morning following the signing of the articles of the surrender, Captain Sands sent General Kirby-Smith and General Magruder into the harbor in one of the vessels of the squadron, and there the last order by General Kirby-Smith as General commanding the Trans-Mississippi Department, and probably the last military order of the Confederacy, was issued. It was a remarkable document, and furnishes a further illustration of the character of the illustrious man who issued it. Upon leaving Shreveport, the General had turned over to Aleck, his faithful body servant, all of his personal possessions, expecting him to keep them. The faithful negro, however, managed to transport them more than a thousand miles and deliver them to the General's family in Virginia. There was a sum of money in gold in the secret service fund of the Trans-Mississippi Department, which was to have been devoted to the execution of the plans for bringing President Davis and his cabinet to the

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Trans-Mississippi region. Upon this fund General Kirby-Smith might have laid his hands without anyone to dispute his right to it. The rightful claimant to it was a government which had gone out of existence. The ethical question as to what should be done with it was easily settled by General Kirby-Smith. The sum originally set apart for the expenses of the mission to Havana was \$5,000. Of that sum \$1,700 were distributed among certain Generals, leaving \$3,300 at the disposal of General Kirby-Smith. It was for this amount that he issued the following order:

“Galveston Harbor, June 3rd, 1865.

“Captain—When you reach New Orleans, you will, after deducting your necessary traveling expenses, turn over to Major-Gen'l Canby, U. S. A., commanding, &c., &c., three thousand three hundred dollars, being the secret service funds C. S., remaining in your possession.

“Respectfully, Yr. obt. svt.,

“E. KIRBY-SMITH, General.

“Captain Erneste Cucullu, A. D. C.”

The Captain executed his trust most faithfully. Accompanied by Dr. Yandell and by another officer, not of General Kirby-Smith's staff, he came to New Orleans on the dispatch boat ordered for them from the fleet off Galveston Harbor. General Canby readily consented to the payment of \$150 to Dr. Yandell

General Kirby-Smith

and \$120 to the other officer, both being in need of assistance. Captain Cucullu retained one dollar for hack hire from the steamer to the headquarters of the General, and took General Canby's receipt for the balance, \$3,029. General Canby's remark upon the completion of the transaction was: "That is just like Kirby-Smith: always the soul of honor."

Galveston Harbor. June 3^d 1865.

Captain,

When you reach New Orleans, you will, after deducting your necessary travelling expenses, turn over to Major Gen^l. Canby, U.S.A. Commanding U. S. Three thousand three hundred dollars, being the secret service fund C. S. remaining in your possession

Respectfully,

Lt. Col. Col.

Edw. Kirby Smith
Quar

Capt^t. Ernesto Cuculler.

ASC

Headquarters, Department of the Gulf,

New Orleans, June 6th, 1865.

Received from Captain Ernest Cuculler Aide-de-camp on the staff of General E Kirby Smith, the sum of Three thousand and twenty nine dollars, (\$3,029.) in specie, being the balance in his hands of the "Secret Service Fund" of the Trans Mississippi Department.

Edw. Kirby
Major Genl. Canby

CHAPTER XIII

EXPATRIATION

IN signing the articles of surrender off Galveston Harbor, General Kirby-Smith regarded his act as equivalent to giving his parole, though, as we have already seen, he expressly reserved to himself the right to leave the country. With the news that General Lee had been indicted for treason, and with the further news of President Johnson's amnesty proclamation of May 29th, 1865, which included in the famous list of exceptions, "all officers of the rebel service who have been educated at the United States Military or Naval Academy," he felt that he was at liberty to retire from the country and that it was prudent, if not his duty, "to place the Rio Grande between himself and harm until the excited feelings of the people at the North had calmed down and the Government had adopted some decided policy toward the South." Partly through the kindness of friends, he secured enough funds to take him out of the country and support him for a short time. He left Hempstead on the 15th of June, and by traveling day and night reached San Antonio without incident. He stayed in San Antonio two days and left on the 21st, in company with General Wilcox, General Hawes and several others; passed safely through the hordes of robbers and plundering deserters with

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which the road was infested, crossed the Rio Grande at Eagle Pass on the 26th, and there was joined by Governors Allen and Moore of Louisiana and a party of Louisiana refugees.

"You should have seen me," wrote the General describing his journey, "in my traveling costume, mounted on a mule, in shirt sleeves with a silk handkerchief tied around my neck *a la* Texas, with revolver and shotgun. I carried all my worldly goods on my person. I actually possessed nothing but the clothes on my back. I had left everything behind except a clear conscience and a sense of having done my duty; and with a light purse but a heavy heart I trudged along over the desert plains and under the burning sun of the Rio Grande. However, it was with a sense of great relief that I crossed the Rio Grande and trod upon Mexican soil. You know how heavily the burdens and responsibilities of my position weighed upon me. I had never sought them, and while I conscientiously and honestly performed my duty, I anxiously looked forward to the hour when I could be relieved. Even the darkness and uncertainty of the future could not shake my feeling of lightness and joy in that I could think of myself as plain Kirby-Smith, relieved of all cares and responsible only for my own acts.

"After a most disagreeable journey through the desert wastes and cactus plains of Nuevo Leon, we

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arrived at Monterey, having successfully eluded the Kickapoo Indians and safely passed through the lines of the Liberals — or Liberal Robbers, into which they have degenerated. Here I found a crowd of some hundred or two Confederates, censorious, fault-finding and dissatisfied. They disgusted me with their crimes and selfishness; and securing a seat in the first *diligencia* for Mexico, in company with General Wilcox and Governor Reynolds, I left Monterey on the morning of the 5th of July, having had one day's rest among the scenes of my youthful exploits and glories. Passing over the battlefield of Buena Vista, through Saltillo, San Luis Potosi and Queretaro, we arrived safely, without being robbed, in the City of Mexico on the 16th, having traveled over twelve hundred miles since leaving Hempstead. I found Colonel Talcott, Major Mordicai, General Stevens and other old friends here. Captain Maury is engaged in securing colonial privileges for Virginians and other immigrants in Mexico — he thinks with success. The government is so much afraid of offending the United States and is so cautious of giving offense that they are careful not to commit themselves upon any point until the sense of the Court at Washington can be felt upon the subject.

“Anxious to reach Havana, where I hoped to hear from you, I hurried off from the City of Mexico, hoping to reach Vera Cruz in time to take the Span-

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ish steamer *Barcelona* for Cuba on the 23rd. Governor Reynolds [of Missouri] accompanied me. Wilcox remained in Mexico. At Orizaba we overtook Captain Beauregard, who left the city the day before us. We reached Vera Cruz in time and embarked immediately on the steamer for Havana, where we arrived on the evening of the 28th. I am staying at the Hotel Cubano, where I found Major Minter and wife just returning from Europe, *en route* for Texas. . . . I found Benjamin here. He leaves on Sunday in the English steamer for Southampton. Breckinridge had left for the same place before my arrival. They both passed through many dangers and suffered many privations in coasting the shores of Florida. I shall spare myself the expense of a journey to Europe until I can hear from General Grant and know whether I can safely return to the United States. In the meantime I shall either go into the interior of the Island, where it is healthier and more economical, or I shall take the steamer *Barcelona* on her return trip, on the 8th of August, and run over to Yucatan, where I can quietly and cheaply await events. I made the acquaintance of several gentlemen from Merida, the capital of Yucatan. They are all urging me to come there. It is a city of some 40,000 inhabitants, probably the cheapest place in the world. It is rather a warm climate, but healthy. Vegetation is most luxuriant; fruits of all descriptions abundant. They all tell me

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I can rent a good house in the best part of the city and support my family for forty or fifty dollars a month. The hire of the best servants is from one to three dollars a month. What was once a palace with five or six acres of garden and fruit trees, with fountains, etc., can be rented for twenty or thirty dollars a month. The place is secluded, has had but little intercourse with the world and the people are primitive and hospitable; have not been contaminated by English or Americans, are honest and kindhearted. Merida is thirty miles from the coast. The American and Spanish steamers now touch at Sisal, the port, four times a month. It is about forty hours' run from Havana or Vera Cruz."

An old friend whom he met in Havana took the General to Matanzas, where he anxiously awaited the course of events. He wrote a private letter to General Grant asking him to write candidly the true state of affairs and what he had to expect, and whether he would be allowed to return to the United States without dishonor or humiliation; offering in the event of his return to give his parole and take the oath of allegiance. His decided preference was to return to the United States if it could be done without the sacrifice of honor. For he appreciated the difficulty of beginning life anew at his age among a foreign people and in a strange country. He would only do

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so if forced to by the injustice of his own government. In his self-imposed exile he kept pretty well informed of the trend of political affairs at home. On the 22nd of September he wrote: "I am most anxious to return and am determined that I will do so if practicable. I see that a change is taking place in the policy of the government. The organization of the State governments and the end of military rule cannot be long delayed. The South is too important an element in the political organization not to be conciliated and courted by the government. Her coalition with the Democratic party of the North is the aim of the President and will soon be accomplished with the ultimate triumph of those principles which we failed to establish with the sword and bayonet."

A few weeks later he wrote in much the same strain in regard to his return:

"I don't know but that it would be the wisest course I could pursue. The policy of the government is evidently conciliatory and is growing more so every day. Mr. Davis' situation has been ameliorated, and the papers say Stephens, Clay and the rest are to be released on parole. The most that could be done to me would be a temporary imprisonment, and that I cannot believe I would be subjected to. . . ." I did not fight for the negro nor for the perpetuation of slavery. I took up arms through a sense of duty and

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in defense of principles whose complete triumph I shall live to see, if not by force of arms, by the awakened sense of the people of the United States to their true interests and to wisdom." Our people should not leave. Instead of seeking asylums abroad, their own destinies and the triumph of the principles for which they fought, are in their own hands. Let them seek by every possible means the re-establishment of the State governments. In the natural course of events the military must then give way to the civil rule, and in the coalition of the South with the Democratic Party of the North and Northwest, we will hold the balance of power and soon secure the establishment of our rights and the triumph of our principles."

He naturally grew very restive under the long delay of General Grant in replying to his letter. Mrs. Kirby-Smith went to Washington to seek for the assurance from the President and from General Grant that her husband would be allowed to return to the country. She performed her mission with success, delivering her husband's letters into the hands of those officials and leaving them to communicate directly with the General. General Grant's letter, dated on the 16th of October, was delayed in the postoffice for want of full prepayment of postage, and after being returned to him was forwarded under date of October 25th. It read as follows:

General Kirby-Smith

“E. Kirby-Smith,

“Late General, Southern Army:

“Your letter dated Havana July 31st, 1865, reached me but a day or two since, as I have been absent from this city since the middle of July.

“After consultation with the President of the United States, I am of the opinion that you had better return to the United States, take the amnesty oath and put yourself on the same footing with other paroled prisoners. I am authorized to say that you will be treated with exactly as if you had surrendered in Texas and been there paroled.

“Yours, &c.,

“U. S. GRANT, Lt. Gen.”

After the receipt of this letter, the General took steamer for New York early in November and was reunited to his family in Lynchburg. He visited Washington on his way to Virginia and wrote the following letter in regard thereto:

“I went to the War Office to inquire about the fate of my letter to General Grant and to see if a parole was necessary before venturing upon Brownlow’s dominions in Tennessee. I was cordially received by my old friends there. I saw the Secretary of War, who was very polite and complimentary. I met in his office General Canby from New Orleans, on whose telegram Grant based his report. He told me it was a mistake; that he afterwards had undoubted evidence

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that I was in no way responsible for the disbandment of the troops, and that injustice had been done me. In other words, I having left the country, he jumped at conclusions and hurriedly reported without facts to justify him and without taking the trouble to investigate the circumstances. . . .

“I saw Prof. Baird at the Smithsonian. He was really glad to see me. He gave me some books. Among others was a package marked ‘Capt. E. K. Smith, U. S. A.,’ which he had been keeping for me for six years. Singular, that after the loss of my library in Florida and Texas, and, by the enemy, I should find at the Capital the only books saved.”

CHAPTER XIV

AT SEWANEE

UPON his return to the United States, General Kirby-Smith took his place among those who had to begin life over again in the readjustment of affairs in the South. Only those who went through this experience at the close of the great Civil War can appreciate what it meant to men who, like him, had staked their all upon the success of the Confederacy and had lost. A number of men placed in the same circumstances, entered the ministry of the Episcopal Church. As we have seen, this was the life-long ambition of General Kirby-Smith, and at times it now seemed that his ambition was likely to be gratified at last. He received a lay-reader's license from the Bishop of Kentucky, and served in that capacity on many occasions in subsequent years, but he was deterred, probably by his age, from taking orders in the Church. Nevertheless the Church in the South never had a more devout or a more devoted layman than he.

He had a host of friends, and these did what they could to assist him in his efforts to start life anew. He was made President of an Accident Insurance Company, and then of the Atlantic and Pacific Telegraph Company, with headquarters in the City of Louisville, Kentucky. But these companies seemed to him too much of the character of the "wild cat"

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schemes devised in great number after the war for the purpose of assisting the impoverished gentlemen of the South to recuperate their lost fortunes, and he was relieved of his connection with them as speedily as possible.

He found educational enterprises more in accordance with his tastes and with his principles, and like General Lee, he felt that the greatest need of the South was the means of educating the young men of the land. He established a military school at New Castle, Kentucky. This school had great success until some of its buildings were destroyed by fire, and the General found himself without the means to replace them. In partnership with General Bushrod Johnston, he entered into a contract with the corporation holding the charter for the University of Nashville, by which that institution was revived, and General Kirby-Smith became its Chancellor from 1870 to 1875. During those years he was active in church life in Nashville; and was a delegate to the Diocesan Convention in 1872, representing the Church of the Holy Trinity. In 1873, Nashville was visited by a scourge of cholera. General Kirby-Smith bravely stood at his post, rendering such services to the sufferers as was possible, and when his rector, the Rev. Mr. Royce, succumbed to the dread disease, he read the burial service over him.

By the reorganization of the University of Nash-

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ville in 1875, General Kirby-Smith was relieved of the Chancellorship. He was thereupon elected Professor of Mathematics in the University of the South, at Sewanee, Tennessee, and entered upon a life wholly in accordance with his tastes. The peculiarities of the University of the South have been exploited in many publications and need not be repeated here. Its conditions at that time were crude, the school having been opened in 1868. In its development to its present position among educational institutions, General Kirby-Smith took an active and important part. He found Sewanee, as he expressed it, "the best place to live in, the best place to die in." He named the house in which he lived "Powhatan Hall," and there he dispensed an all-embracing hospitality.

His family was already large when he came to Sewanee. Other children were born to him, and there his five boys and six girls grew up. There he gratified his fondness for dogs and always had at least two bearing the names of "Ned" and "Dick," though belonging to successive generations. Another important member of his domestic menage was "George," his horse, "with its long swinging gallop," which also became in time, with its rider, one of the familiar features of the unique University Domain; for Sewanee's woodland situation gave the General grand opportunities for the gratification of his fond-

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ness for researches in the field of natural science, and he tramped or rode all over the Cumberland Mountain region, and classified its flora and fauna, and studied its conchology and geology.

He had for his neighbors and associates in the University many who had taken part in the great civil strife. But with General Kirby-Smith the war was over, and although he was proud to the last to consider himself a Floridian, he rejoiced also that he was a citizen of the United States. When the Confederate Veterans were organized, he was given the rank therein of Lieutenant-General. But he was not always able to attend the reunions of that organization, and participate in person in those great occasions, which, for enthusiasm over a "cause" confessedly "lost" are unequalled in all history. He took perhaps the deepest interest in the reunion of the survivors of his class at West Point, held in Philadelphia, where great men who had worn the blue met great men who had worn the gray, and without either charging the other with wrong, rejoiced together that the country had been reunited.

When, in the "eighties," the war was being fought over again in the popular magazines, the suggestion was frequently made that the General tell his story of the war. That he might have told an exceedingly interesting story from his standpoint, is clearly indicated in the preceding pages. But he modestly

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refrained, and beyond what we have seen, he contributed nothing to the controversies of those times. He was, however, made Chairman of the Historical Committee of the Confederate Veterans, though his life was not spared long enough for him to accomplish much in the discharge of his duties in that office. Rumor has it that a generous check was offered him for a magazine article, but it would have led him into a controversy with some of the other generals, and he had never a harsh word for any of the actors in the war or a word of harsh criticism. So he preferred to occupy his thoughts with his duties as Professor of Mathematics at the University of the South, with roaming over the Mountain, and with papers to be read before the Professors' Club at Sewanee — the ever famous E. Q. B. which everyone who knows Sewanee will recognize — and the offer was declined.

His lovable character, which, in the exigencies of military life, was observed only by the few who were brought into close contact with him, was more widely manifested in his life at Sewanee; though even in his military career he frequently exemplified the well known words:

The bravest are the tenderest;
The loving are the daring.

His high devotion to principle was called to stand further severe tests. "Powhatan" was burned to the

General Kirby-Smith

ground on the eve of New Year's Day, 1891. The misfortune brought many letters of condolence to its owner, and many touching offers of assistance were received, as proof of the wide-spread affection felt for the Confederate leader. The latter the General treated with appreciation and with a dignity that made those who knew him feel the greater respect and admiration for him. A few months before his death there came to him an offer of an annual stipend which would have placed him and his family forever beyond the reach of want. It was offered in consideration of his allowing his name to be used as the guarantor of a lottery company. But there was not money enough in the country to purchase the name of Kirby-Smith for any such purpose, and the returning mail bore to the lottery company the General's courteous but emphatic declination.

The end of the distinguished career here narrated came in March, 1893. The General attended a reunion of the Confederate Veterans in New Orleans the early part of that month and was present at the funeral of General P. T. Beauregard, whose death left him the sole surviving full General of either army in the great Civil Strife. Returning from the funeral, he had a chill and was ill for several days at the home of his cousin, Mrs. Frederick W. Tilton, in New Orleans. He felt well enough to leave for Sewanee

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on the 15th, and hoped to report for duty at the opening of the Lent Term of the University. But upon his arrival in Sewanee he felt that the end was approaching. He took further cold which resulted in the congestion of the right lung. His physicians recognized from the first that the chances were against his recovery, and despite the care and attention he received, he sank rapidly. Once or twice during periods of semi-consciousness his mind wandered through past scenes, the old soldier asserted himself and he ordered the "batteries to be brought up." On the morning of the 28th of March, he became totally unconscious, but not before he had shown himself strong in the Christian faith, and his last connected utterance was a verse from the Twenty-third Psalm: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." A little after three in the afternoon of that day he "passed over the river to rest in the shade of the trees."

On Good Friday, the 31st of March, his funeral was held in the University Chapel, being attended by all the University authorities and a large concourse of Confederate Veterans. The solemn burial service was said by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Quintard, Bishop of Tennessee. An eloquent address was made by the Rev. Dr. Gailor, then Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South, afterwards Bishop of Tennessee,

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and another address was made on behalf of the Confederate Veterans by Colonel Claiborne.

The burial was in the Cemetery at Sewanee, where a simple monument, bearing with its appropriate inscription on one side the symbol of the Confederate Army, and surmounted by the symbol of the Catholic Church, marks the last resting place of the distinguished Christian soldier, the rightly named "Chevalier Bayard of the Southern Confederacy."

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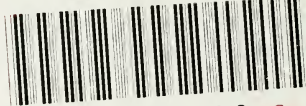
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